

# THE PINOCHET FILE

**A Declassified Dossier on  
Atrocity and Accountability**

**Peter Kornbluh**

**A NATIONAL SECURITY  
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UPDATED FOR THE **FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY** OF THE COUP IN CHILE



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A Declassified Dossier  
on Atrocity and Accountability



PETER KORNBLUH



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*IN MY MEMORY*

To my father, Hy Kornbluh, this book is dedicated. He taught me, through parental patience as well as his social and political commitment, the simple meaning of human decency in a world of many ills and evils that could not be ignored—as he made sure I understood. To him I owe the construct of conscience and the sense of common community that has enabled this work from the first page to the last.







# Introduction: History and Accountability

*It is not a part of American history that we are proud of.*

—Secretary of State Colin Powell, responding to a question on the morality of the U.S. role in Chile, February 20, 2003

Just before midnight on October 16, 1998, two Scotland Yard officials slipped through the halls of an elite private clinic in London and secured the room in which former Chilean dictator, General Augusto Pinochet, was recovering from back surgery. With English efficiency, they disarmed his private bodyguards, disconnected the phones, posted eight policemen outside the door, and then proceeded to serve Pinochet with a warrant from INTERPOL. Within minutes, British authorities accomplished what the Chilean courts had refused to do since the end of his military regime in 1990—they placed Pinochet under arrest for crimes against humanity.

General Pinochet, whose name became synonymous with gross violations of human rights during his seventeen-year dictatorship, spent 504 days under house arrest in London. Only aggressive diplomatic intervention by Chile's civilian government, pressured by the *Pinochetistas* in the Chilean military, and an adroit propaganda campaign waged by his lawyers, kept him from being extradited to Spain to stand trial for offenses ranging from torture to terrorism. After sixteen months in detention, the British government released the eighty-four-year-old general on what it termed "humanitarian grounds." When he returned to his homeland, however, he was stripped of his immunity from prosecution, indicted, and interrogated. At one point Pinochet even faced the ignominious prospect of being fingerprinted and posing for a mug shot. Initially, the Chilean courts ruled that due to age-related dementia Pinochet could not be put on trial for the abuses committed under his military reign; at the time of his death, however, Pinochet faced multiple indictments.

Pinochet evaded punishment. But the saga of the “Pinochet Case” remains a historic milestone in the pursuit of accountability over atrocity. His arrest marked a long-awaited vindication for not only Pinochet’s victims, but the victims of repression everywhere, as well as a turning point in the use of international law to pursue their repressors. It will forever be remembered as a transformational moment for the human rights movement, and a landmark event in both Chile and the United States of America.

For the cause of human rights, the drama of Pinochet’s detention has established a precedent for the globalization of justice. Now that the Pinochet case has empowered the concept of universal jurisdiction—the ability of any state to hold gross violators accountable to international codes of justice—tyrants will no longer be able to leave their homelands and feel secure from the reach of international law. For Chile, Pinochet’s arrest ended his ability to repress his nation’s collective memory of the horrors of his rule, and restrain his victims from seeking legal accountability for the crimes committed during his regime. Although Pinochet eluded justice, he did not escape judgment. Moreover, a number of his top military men have been indicted, arrested, and imprisoned since his arrest.

As Chileans continue to resurrect and redress their bloody and buried past, in Washington Pinochet’s arrest has also led to a massive exhumation of secret U.S. government archives. The declassified Pinochet files not only renewed international interest in the history of his regime; they have refocused public attention on the United States’s own responsibility for the denouement of democracy and the rise of dictatorship in Chile.

## The Other 9/11

For almost three decades, September 11 marked a day of infamy for Chileans, Latin Americans, and the world community—a day when Chilean air force jets attacked La Moneda palace in Santiago as the prelude to the vicious coup that brought Pinochet to power. In the aftermath of “9/11,” 2001, it is more likely to be remembered for the shocking terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. With that horror, the United States and Chile now share “that dreadful date,” as writer Ariel Dorfman has eloquently described it, “again a Tuesday, once again an 11th of September filled with death.”

But the histories of the United States and Chile are joined by far more than the coincidence of Osama bin Laden’s timing. Washington has played



a pivotal role in Chile's traumatic past. Beginning in the early 1960s, U.S. policy makers initiated more than a decade of efforts to control Chile's political life, culminating in a massive covert effort to "bring down," as Richard Nixon and members of his cabinet candidly discussed, the duly elected Popular Unity government of Salvador Allende. Within hours of realizing that goal on September 11, 1973, the White House began transmitting secret messages welcoming General Pinochet to power and expressing a "desire to cooperate with the military Junta and to assist in any appropriate way." Until September 1976, when Pinochet sent a team of assassins to commit an act of international terrorism in Washington, D.C., Secretary of State Henry Kissinger steadfastly maintained a posture of avid support for the Pinochet regime. The assassination of Orlando Letelier and Ronni Moffitt on the streets of the nation's capital would dominate U.S.-Chilean relations for the next decade, until the dictatorship began to unravel under growing popular pressure in Chile, and the United States fully and finally abandoned its one-time anticommunist ally. U.S. policy had an impact in changing not only the composition of Chile's government in 1973 but also the course of its violent future during the next seventeen years.

If U.S. policy has had a major influence on events in Chile, those events have returned to influence the political discourse of the United States—and indeed the world. The country that Chilean poet Pablo Neruda described as a "long petal of sea, wine and snow" holds a special place in the hearts and minds of the international community. Since the early 1960s, Chile has attracted international attention for a number of utopian political projects and economic and social experiments. In 1964, Chile became a designated "showcase" for the Alliance for Progress—a U.S. effort to stave off revolutionary movements in Latin America by bolstering centrist, middle-class, Christian Democratic political parties. But with the election of Salvador Allende on September 4, 1970, Chile became the first Latin American nation to democratically elect a socialist president. The *Via Chilena*—peaceful road to socialist reform—captured the imagination of progressive forces around the globe, while provoking the consternation of imperial-minded U.S. policy makers. "We set the limits of diversity," Kissinger was heard to tell his staff as the United States initiated a series of covert operations against Allende, which "at a minimum will either insure his failure," according to a SECRET Kissinger proposal to Nixon, "and at a maximum might lead to situations where his collapse or overthrow later may be more feasible."

The sharp contrast between the peaceful nature of Allende's program for change, and the violent coup that left him dead and Chile's long-standing

democratic institutions destroyed, truly shocked the world. The Pinochet regime's dictatorial bent, and abysmal human rights record quickly became a universal political and humanitarian issue. Revelations of CIA involvement in Allende's overthrow, and Washington's unabashed embrace of the Junta raised Chile's worldwide profile even further, to a point where U.S. policy makers could no longer ignore the condemnation. "Chile has taken on Spain's image in the 1940s as a symbol of right-wing tyranny," an aide reported to Kissinger in one SECRET briefing paper. "Like it or not, we are identified with the regime's origins and hence charged with some responsibility for its actions." "Chile," the U.S. embassy noted in a 1974 strategy paper stamped SECRET,

has become something of a cause celebre in both the Western and Communist worlds. What happens in Chile is thus a matter of rather special significance to the United States. Distant and small though it is, Chile has long been viewed universally as a demonstration area for economic and social experimentation. Now it is in a sense in the front line of world ideological conflict.

In the United States, Chile joined Vietnam on the front line of the national conflict over the corruption of American values in the making and exercise of U.S. foreign policy. During the mid-1970s, events in Chile generated a major debate on human rights, covert action, and the proper place for both in America's conduct abroad. The Kissingerian disregard for Pinochet's mounting atrocities appalled the public and prompted Congress to pass precedent-setting legislation curtailing foreign aid to his regime, and to mandate a human rights criteria for all U.S. economic and military assistance. At the same time, revelations of the CIA's covert campaign to block Allende's election and then destabilize his democratically elected government generated a series of sensational intelligence scandals forcing the country for the first time, according to the late Senator Frank Church, "to debate and decide the merits of future use of covert action as an instrument of U.S. foreign policy."

Indeed, Chile became the catalyst for the first public hearing ever held on covert action. Senator Church's Senate Select Committee to Study Government Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities—known as the Church Committee—conducted the first major Congressional investigation into clandestine operations and published the first case studies, *Covert Action in Chile, 1963-1973*, and *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, detailing those operations abroad. Once revealed, the U.S. government's covert



campaign in Chile led to the exposure of other foreign policy excesses, scandals, and corruptions.

The findings of the Church Committee, and the public revulsion of Washington's ongoing association with Pinochet's brutality, prompted a widespread movement to return U.S. foreign policy to the moral precepts of American society. "Chile is just the latest example for a lot of people in this country of the United States not being true to its values," one internal State Department memo conceded in June 1975. The debate around U.S. misconduct in Chile, as Richard Harris wrote in *The New Yorker* magazine in 1979, raised the fundamental question: "How did we become such a nation?"

That question remains relevant to the worldwide debate over the exercise of U.S. power in the twenty-first century. Indeed, a historical review of U.S.-Chilean relations raises many of the same contentious issues the American people, and the international community, confronted as the Bush administration launched its war on Iraq: preemptive strikes, regime change, unilateral aggression, international terrorism, political assassination, sovereignty, and the deaths of innocents. After so many years, Chile remains the ultimate case study of morality—the lack of it—in the making of U.S. foreign policy. "With respect to . . . Chile in the 1970s," as Secretary of State Colin Powell conceded when asked how the United States could consider itself morally superior to Iraq when Washington had backed the overthrow of Chilean democracy, "it is not a part of American history that we are proud of."

## Chile Declassified

For all of Chile's importance and notoriety in the ongoing debate over U.S. foreign policy, the historical record has remained largely hidden from public scrutiny. The covert operations, murders, scandals, cover-ups, and controversies over human rights violations—all generated massive amounts of top-secret documentation. But only a handful of the hundreds of documents reviewed by the Senate Committee staff in the mid-1970s were actually declassified. Legal proceedings against former CIA director Richard Helms for lying to Congress on covert operations in Chile, and civil lawsuits brought by the families of Pinochet's most famous victims, Charles Horman, Orlando Letelier, and Ronni Karpen Moffitt, yielded references to thousands of records on U.S. relations with the Pinochet regime at the height of its repression; but the U.S. government refused to release most of those. The documents the government did declassify were so heavily censored—many completely

blacked out except for their title and date—as to render them useless for judicial or historical evaluation.

Pinochet's arrest in London renewed national and international interest in the vast secret U.S. archives on Chile. Those records—CIA intelligence reports, State Department cables, Defense Department analysis, NSC memoranda, among other documents—were known to contain extraordinarily detailed coverage of Pinochet's atrocities, the inner workings of his internal repression and acts of international terrorism, as well as Washington's policies toward his regime. U.S. documentation would provide a wealth of evidence to prosecute Pinochet and his subordinates—if only the Clinton administration could be persuaded to declassify thousands of files containing tens of thousands of pages of secret information compiled during Chile's military dictatorship.

The Clinton White House had already pioneered a process of declassifying U.S. documentation to advance the cause of human rights. During his first term, President Clinton authorized major declassifications on El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala in response to scandals over U.S. misconduct and repression in those countries. On Chile, the administration faced a chorus of strong and poignant voices from the families of Pinochet's American victims, as well as pressure from Congress to release evidence that would assist Spain's efforts to bring Pinochet to justice. Both publicly and privately, human rights and right-to-know groups including my organization, the National Security Archive, lobbied administration officials to declassify documents in the name of human rights, justice, and history.

For a variety of political reasons, the Clinton administration resisted any policy initiative or gesture that would aid Spain's unprecedented application of universal jurisdiction to Pinochet's crimes. Doing nothing, however, would be perceived as protecting the vilest of Latin American dictators in recent history. Eventually, the administration agreed to conduct a "Chile Declassification Project"—not to provide documents to Spain but for the benefit of Chilean and American citizens. The declassification review, the State Department announced in February 1999, would "respond to the expressed wishes" of Congress and the families of Pinochet's American victims, and encourage "a consensus within Chile on reinvigorating its truth and reconciliation process."

To its credit, the Clinton administration pulled, prodded, and pushed the secrecy system into divulging significant amounts of information. Under the leadership of Secretary Madeleine Albright, the State Department appreciated the need for thorough declassification to advance human rights and historical honesty; the National Archives (in charge of presidential papers), the NSC,



Pentagon, and Justice Department in descending degrees also cooperated in the project. But the “securocrats” in the CIA—the agency with the most revealing documentation to offer, but also the most secrets to hide—proved to be particularly recalcitrant. For months, Agency officials sought to withhold any document demonstrating covert U.S. involvement in the death of democracy and rise of dictatorship in Chile. A special amendment to the Intelligence Act in 1999 required the Agency to produce a written report for Capitol Hill on its covert operations, *CIA Activities in Chile*. But only significant public pressure—from human rights groups, key members of Congress, and dedicated officials inside the executive branch including President Clinton himself—forced the CIA to partially open its secret files on covert American ties to the violence of the coup and, in its aftermath, to the military and secret police institutions that systematically carried out Pinochet’s abuses.

The Chile Declassification Project yielded some 2,200 CIA records. In addition, approximately 3,800 White House, National Security Council, Pentagon, and FBI records were released, along with 18,000 State Department documents that shed considerable light on Pinochet’s seventeen-year dictatorship as well as U.S. policies and actions in Chile between 1970 and 1990. In all, the Declassification Project produced 24,000 never-before-seen documents—the largest discretionary executive branch release of records on any country or foreign policy issue.

These documents provide a chronicle of twenty dramatic and dense years of American policy and operations in Chile, as well as a comprehensive chronology of Pinochet’s rampant repression. Stamped TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE, EYES ONLY, NODIS [no distribution to other agencies] NOFORN, [No Foreign Distribution], and ROGER CHANNEL [high urgency, restricted dissemination], among other classification categories, they include White House memoranda of conversation [memcons] recording the private commentary of U.S. presidents and their aides; decision directives and briefing papers prepared for Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and Ronald Reagan; minutes of covert-action strategy meetings chaired by Henry Kissinger; high-level intelligence reports based on informants inside the Pinochet regime; and hundreds of heavily redacted but still revealing CIA Directorate of Operations communications with agents in its Santiago Station that detail massive covert action to change the course of Chilean history.

Indeed, the documents contain new information on virtually every major issue, episode, and scandal that pockmark this controversial era. They cover events such as: Project FUBELT, the CIA’s covert action to block Salvador Allende from becoming president of Chile in the fall of 1970; the assassination of Chilean commander-in-chief René Schneider; U.S. strategy and op-

erations to destabilize the Allende government; the degree of American support for the coup; the postcoup executions of American citizens; the origins and operations of Pinochet's secret police, DINA; CIA ties to DINA chieftain Manuel Contreras; Operation Condor; the terrorist car-bombing of Orlando Letelier and Ronni Moffitt in Washington, D.C.; the murder by burning of Washington resident Rodrigo Rojas; and Pinochet's final efforts to thwart a transition to civilian rule. Many of the documents name names, revealing atrocities and exposing those who perpetrated them. These records have been, and are being, used to advance judicial investigations into the human rights atrocities of Pinochet's military and to hold regime officials accountable for their crimes.

They are also being used to rewrite the history books on the U.S. role in Chile. For students of this history, the declassified documents offer an opportunity to be a fly on the wall as presidents, national security advisers, CIA directors, and secretaries of state debated crucial decisions and issued nation-changing orders. They also allow the reader to observe the minute-by-minute, day-by-day process of how those orders were implemented in Chile. A comparison between what was said and done in secret and the official statements, testimonials, and memoirs reveals, in stunning detail, the mendacity that accompanied U.S. policy.

The documents also permit a reexamination of many if not all of the outstanding questions that haunt this history. Questions such as:

- What role did the United States actually play in the violent September 11, 1973, coup that brought Augusto Pinochet to power?
- What motivated President Nixon and his National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger to authorize and oversee a campaign to overthrow and undermine Chilean democracy?
- What support did the CIA covertly provide to help the Pinochet regime consolidate? What assistance did the CIA give to the murderous secret police, DINA?
- Were U.S. officials negligent, or possibly complicit, in the execution of Charles Horman, an American citizen detained by the Chilean military following the coup whose case became the subject of the Hollywood movie, *Missing*?
- What did U.S. intelligence know about Operation Condor, the Chilean-led network of Southern Cone secret police agencies that organized international acts of state-sponsored terrorism to eliminate critics of their regimes?



- Could U.S. officials have detected and deterred the September 21, 1976, car-bombing that killed Orlando Letelier and Ronni Karpen Moffitt—the most egregious act of international terrorism committed in Washington, D.C. before the September 11, 2001, attack on the Pentagon?
- And, in the end, what role did Washington play in the denouement of General Pinochet's dictatorship?

## The Pinochet File

This book is an effort to revisit the complex and controversial history of U.S. policy toward democracy and dictatorship in Chile. The secret files declassified pursuant to Pinochet's arrest constitute a trove of new evidence that goes well beyond what the Church Committee reported in the mid-1970s on U.S. efforts to destabilize Chile's democratically elected government. CIA memoranda with titles such as "Chile: Initial Post Coup Support," and "Western Hemisphere Division Project Renewals for FY 1975," shed considerable light on the long hidden history of secret U.S. efforts to support the incipient military Junta. Intelligence reporting on the regime's machinery of repression provides a clear chronology of what Washington knew and when it knew it regarding General Pinochet's campaign of terror—both inside Chile and abroad. And the declassified record reveals, in rather extraordinary detail, what U.S. officials did and did not do when confronted with that knowledge.

Drawing on the abundance of information contained in the declassified documents, *The Pinochet File* provides an investigative narrative to advance a history that remains disputed to this day. At the same time, the book is an attempt to tell the story of the United States and Chile through a representative selection of documents, drawn from the long paper trail left by multiple U.S. offices and agencies, from the White House to the CIA Santiago Station. Distilling a full history into a compilation of one hundred or so reproduced records is, admittedly, impossible; for reasons of space, I have been forced to select relatively short documents and in some cases only partially reproduce them. Dozens of key documents that could not be included are quoted at length in the text. Full versions of abbreviated records published in this book, along with additional germane documentation, can be accessed on the National Security Archive's Web site, [www.nsarchive.org](http://www.nsarchive.org). Ambitious readers who want to explore the broader universe of declassified documents on Chile



can consult the Department of State Web site—[www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)—for the full collection of 24,000 U.S. records declassified under the Chile Declassification Project.

Documents are essential to the reconstruction of history, but they do not always tell the whole story. Still classified records—and there are many on Chile—may contain additional or even contradictory information; moreover elements of these events may not have been recorded on paper. Where possible, I have attempted to supplement and clarify the information in the documents through interviews with the retired U.S. foreign policy makers who wrote or read them, among them former assistant secretaries of state for Inter-American affairs, NSC senior advisers on Latin America, several ambassadors and numerous State Department, NSC, Justice Department, and intelligence officials. I have also sought to determine what information remains hidden under the blackened sections of key documents. In a number of cases—designated in the text by information inserted within parenthesis—material blacked out in one document could be gleaned from another. There are still secrets being kept on Chile, to be sure; but today there are fewer of them.

That the secrecy surrounding Chile and U.S. relations with Pinochet has been maintained for so long reflects both the controversial nature of this past, as well as its continuing relevance to the ongoing and future debate over American intervention abroad and the moral foundations of U.S. foreign policy. The declassified documents highlighted in the pages that follow are, in essence, a dossier of atrocity and accountability, addressing not only the general and his regime, but also the shameful record of U.S. support for bloodshed and dictatorship. “One goal of the project,” states the White House statement that accompanied the final release of thousands of once-secret papers, “is to put the original documents before the public so that it may judge for itself the extent to which U.S. actions undercut the cause of democracy and human rights in Chile.” This book, hopefully, can contribute to rendering that judgment.

## Project FUBELT: “Formula for Chaos”

*Carnage could be considerable and prolonged, i.e. civil war. . . . You have asked us to provoke chaos in Chile . . . we provide you with formula for chaos which is unlikely to be bloodless. To dissimulate U.S. involvement will clearly be impossible.*

—TOP SECRET CIA Santiago Station cable, October 10, 1970

On September 15, 1970, in a fifteen-minute meeting between 3:25 and 3:40 P.M., President Richard Nixon ordered the CIA to initiate a massive covert intervention in Chile. The goal: to block Chilean President-elect Salvador Allende from taking and holding office. Allende was a well-known and popular politician in Chile; the 1970 campaign constituted his fourth run for the presidency. He was “one of the most astute politicians and parliamentarians in a nation whose favorite pastime is kaffeeklatsch politics,” noted one secret CIA analysis. His victory on September 4, in a free and fair—if narrow—election, marked the first time in the twentieth century that a “socialist parliamentarian,” as Allende referred to himself, had been democratically voted into office in the Western Hemisphere.

During a White House meeting with Henry Kissinger, Attorney General John Mitchell, and CIA Director Richard Helms, Nixon issued explicit instructions to foment a coup that would prevent Allende from being inaugurated on November 4, or subsequently bring down his new administration. Handwritten notes, taken by the CIA director, recorded Nixon’s directive:

- 1 in 10 chance perhaps, but save Chile!
- worth spending
- not concerned risks involved
- no involvement of embassy



- \$10,000,000 available, more if necessary
- full-time job—best men we have
- game plan
- make economy scream
- 48 hours for plan of action

Helm's summary would become the first record of an American president ordering the overthrow of a democratically elected government. (Doc 1)

The CIA moved quickly to implement the president's instructions. In a meeting the next day with top officials of the Agency's covert operations division, Helms told his aides that "President Nixon had decided that an Allende regime in Chile was not acceptable to the United States" and had "asked the Agency to prevent Allende from coming to power or to unseat him." (Doc 2) Under the supervision of CIA deputy director of plans, Thomas Karamessines, and Western Hemisphere division chief, William Broe, a "Special Task Force" with two operational units—one focused exclusively on the Chilean military headed by veteran covert operative David Atlee Phillips, and the second devoted to the "political/constitutional route" to blocking Allende—was immediately established and activated. By 8:30 A.M. on September 17, 1970, the new Chile Task Force had produced its first "Situation Report" complete with an organizational chart and a list of "possibilities" to "stimulate unrest and other occurrences to force military action." (Doc 3)

To provide a presidential cachet for the Task Force, later that day Kissinger obtained Nixon's signed authorization to create a "mechanism" to "work fast and in secrecy" and "make decisions, send out directives, keep tabs on things . . . coordinate activities, and plan implementing actions."<sup>1</sup> In an afternoon meeting on September 18, Kissinger received an initial briefing from DCI Helms on the status of what would become one of the CIA's most infamous covert operations. By then, CIA headquarters had dispatched a special covert agent to Santiago to deliver secret instructions to the Station chief on the new operation, code-named Project FUBELT.<sup>2</sup> And the CIA's Chile Task Force had already produced "Situation Report #2" proclaiming: "there is a coup possibility now in the wind."

## Genesis of a Coup Policy

Nixon's bald directive on Chile was neither unparalleled nor unprecedented. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth-century history of U.S. policy toward Latin America, presidents frequently authorized overt military ef-

forts to remove governments deemed undesirable to U.S. economic and political interests. After the signing of the United Nations charter in 1948, which highlighted nonintervention and respect for national sovereignty, the White House made ever-greater use of the newly created Central Intelligence Agency to assert U.S. hegemonic designs. Under Dwight Eisenhower, the CIA launched a set of covert paramilitary operations to terminate the Guatemalan government of Jacobo Arbenz; both Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy gave green lights to clandestine action to undermine Fidel Castro in Cuba. It was the Kennedy administration that first initiated covert operations in Chile—to block the election of Salvador Allende.

Allende first attracted Washington's attention when his socialist coalition, then known as the Frente de Accion Popular (FRAP), narrowly lost the 1958 election to the right-wing Partido Nacional, led by Jorge Alessandri. The Alessandri government, noted a report prepared by the Agency for International Development's (AID) predecessor, the International Cooperation Administration, had "five years in which to prove to the electorate that their medicine is the best medicine. Failure almost automatically ensures a marked swing to the left."

But in the aftermath of the 1959 revolution in Cuba, the Kennedy administration recognized that Washington's traditional support for small oligarchic political parties, such as the Partido Nacional, was far more likely to enhance the strength of the Latin American left, rather than weaken it. Fostering reformist, centrist political parties to be what Kennedy called "a viable alternative" to leftist revolutionary movements became a key goal. "The problem for U.S. policy is to do what it can to hasten the middle-class revolution," Kennedy's aide Arthur Schlesinger Jr. wrote to the president in a March 10, 1961, report that would become an argument for the Alliance for Progress. "If the possessing classes of Latin America made the middle-class revolution impossible, they will make a 'workers-and-peasants' revolution inevitable."

In Chile, the Partido Demócrata-Christiano (PDC) led by Eduardo Frei appeared tailor-made as a model for that "middle-class" revolution. Overruling aides who wanted to continue support for Alessandri, Kennedy arranged for Frei, and another centrist leader, Radomiro Tomic, to have a secret backdoor visit to the White House in early 1962. The purpose of the visit was to allow the president to evaluate these new Chilean leaders personally, and, as one report noted, "decide to whom to give covert aid in the coming election."<sup>3</sup>

The CIA's two-volume internal history of clandestine support for the Christian Democrats titled *The Chilean Election Operation of 1964—A Case History 1961-1964* remains highly classified. It is known to contain information,



however, on covert operations that started in 1961—through the establishment of assets in the small centrist political parties and in key labor, media, student, and peasant organizations, and the creation of pivotal propaganda mechanisms—and escalated into massive secret funding of Frei's 1964 campaign. In April 1962, the 5412 Panel Special Group, as the then high-level interagency team that oversaw covert operations was named, approved CIA proposals to "carry out a program of covert financial assistance" to the Christian Democrats.<sup>4</sup> Between then and the election, the CIA funneled some \$4 million into Chile to help get Frei elected, including \$2.6 million in direct funds to underwrite more than half of his campaign budget. In order to enhance Frei's image as a moderate centrist, the CIA also covertly funded a group of center-right political parties.

In addition to direct political funding, the agency conducted fifteen other major operations in Chile, among them the covert creation and support for numerous civic organizations to influence and mobilize key voting sectors. The biggest operation, however, was a massive \$3 million anti-Allende propaganda campaign. The Church Committee report, *Covert Action in Chile 1963–1973*, described the breadth of these operations:

Extensive use was made of the press, radio, films, pamphlets, posters, leaflets, direct mailings, paper streamers, and wall paintings. It was a "scare campaign" that relied heavily on images of Soviet tanks and Cuban firing squads and was directed especially to women. Hundreds of thousands of copies of the anticommunist pastoral letter of Pope Pius XI were distributed by Christian Democratic organizations. . . . "Disinformation" and "black propaganda"—material which purported to originate from another source, such as the Chilean Communist Party—were used as well.<sup>5</sup>

In the several months before the September 1964 election, these operations reached a crescendo of activity. One CIA propaganda group, for example, was distributing 3,000 anticommunist political posters and producing twenty-four radio news spots day, as well as twenty-six weekly news commentaries—all directed at turning Chilean voters away from Allende and toward Eduardo Frei. The CIA, as the Church Committee report noted, regarded this propaganda campaign "as the most effective activity undertaken by the U.S. on behalf of the Christian Democratic candidates."

"All polls favor Eduardo Frei over Salvador Allende," Secretary of State Dean Rusk reported in a recently declassified "TOP SECRET—EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTION" memorandum for President Lyndon Johnson dated August 14, 1964, three weeks before the election:

We are making a *major covert effort* to *reduce chances* of Chile being the first American country to elect *an avowed Marxist president*. Our well-concealed program embraces special economic assistance to assure stability, aid to the armed forces and police to maintain order, and political action and propaganda tied closely to Frei's campaign. [emphasis in original]

The CIA would subsequently credit these covert operations with helping Frei to an overwhelming 57 percent majority victory on September 4, 1964—a margin unheard of in Chile's typical three-way presidential races.

With Frei's election, the Johnson administration declared Chile “a showcase for the Alliance for Progress.” But Washington faced the same dilemma it had faced in 1958—if Frei's policies failed to sustain social and economic development Chilean voters would turn to Allende's leftist coalition in the 1970 election. The U.S., therefore, embarked on a massive program of economic, military, and covert political assistance.

Almost overnight, Chile became the leading recipient of U.S. aid in Latin America. Between 1962 and 1970, this country of only ten million people received over 1.2 billion dollars in economic grants and loans—an astronomical amount for that era. In addition, AID pressured major U.S. corporations, particularly the two copper giants, Anaconda and Kennecott, which dominated the Chilean economy, to modernize and expand their investments and operations. Since Frei's main appeal to many Chilean voters was his policy of “Chileanization”—partial nationalization of the copper industry—the U.S. government offered the corporations what Ambassador Edward Korry called “a sweetheart deal,” providing “political risk insurance” for investments and assets in Chile. Meant to mobilize private capital in uncertain investment climates, the program was first administered through AID, and later a new quasi-governmental organization called the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). In 1969, OPIC's \$400 million of political risk coverage in Chile not only dwarfed its programs in all other nations, but far exceeded its actual holdings. The program created a further U.S. political and economic incentive to block the appeal of an Allende candidacy in 1970.

U.S. military assistance programs also dramatically increased during the 1960s. Although Chile faced no internal or external security threat, military aid totaled \$91 million between 1962 and 1970—a clear effort to establish closer ties to the Chilean generals. A Congressional survey of security assistance programs in Latin America determined that such assistance to Chile was “political and economic in nature, rather than simply military.”<sup>6</sup>

And the CIA continued its covert intervention through political action and propaganda operations. Between 1965 and 1970, the Agency spent \$2 mil-



lion on some twenty projects designed to enhance the Christian Democrats and undermine Allende's political coalition. In February 1965, for example, the Agency was authorized to spend \$175,000 on direct funding of select candidates in the March Congressional elections; nine CIA-backed candidates were elected, and thirteen FRAP candidates the CIA had targeted for defeat lost. In July 1968, \$350,000 was approved for influencing the 1969 congressional elections; ten of twelve CIA-selected candidates won. The Santiago Station also provided surreptitious funding to Frei's party for two years following his election, and developed assets in his cabinet, as well as within the military. Funds were provided to church organizations and pro-U.S. labor agencies. New media assets were developed, including those who "placed CIA-inspired editorials almost daily in *El Mercurio*," according to the Church Committee report. The propaganda mechanisms developed during the 1960s, in particular, put the CIA in a strong position to influence the three-way 1970 presidential campaign, which pitted Allende's new coalition, Unidad Popular (UP) against former president Jorge Alessandri, and Radomiro Tomic of the Christian Democrat party.

By 1970, the United States had a major political and economic stake in preventing Allende from becoming Chile's president. Indeed, his accession to that office would signify the abject failure of a protracted and concerted U.S. policy to undermine his socialist appeal. Indeed, the ten-year history of U.S. overt and covert actions and investments in Chile did far more than simply set a precedent for President Nixon's decision to foment a coup against Allende; it created what Ambassador Korry called a "fiduciary responsibility"—an imperial sense of obligation and entitlement—to overturn the democratic decision of the Chilean electorate. As Korry put it: The question was "not saying 'whether,' but 'how' and 'when' the U.S. would intervene."<sup>7</sup>

### "Extreme Option": Coup Contingencies

In his memoirs, Henry Kissinger identified Chilean millionaire, owner and publisher of *El Mercurio* and distributor for the PepsiCo Co., Agustín Edwards, as the catalyst of Richard Nixon's September 15 orders for a coup. "By then Nixon had taken a personal role," he writes in *White House Years*. "He had been triggered into action on September 14 by Agustín Edwards, the publisher of *El Mercurio*, the most respected Chilean daily newspaper, who had come to Washington to warn of the consequences of an Allende takeover. Edwards was staying at the house of Don Kendall, the chief executive officer of Pepsi-Cola, who by chance was bringing his father to see Nixon that very day."

Through Kendall, who was one of Nixon's closest friends and biggest contributors, Edwards played a role in focusing the president's angry attention on Allende. On the morning of September 15, Edwards met with Kissinger and Attorney General Mitchell for breakfast and briefed them on the threat Allende posed to his and other pro-American business interests. On Kissinger's instructions, Helms had also met with Edwards in a downtown Washington hotel. In a deposition before the Church Committee—still classified after more than twenty-eight years—Helms stated that it was his impression “that the President called this [September 15] meeting [to order a coup] because of Edwards presence in Washington and what he heard from Kendall about what Edwards was saying about conditions in Chile and what was happening there.”<sup>8</sup>

But the declassified record demonstrates that the White House, CIA, State Department, and the Pentagon had already been preparing and evaluating coup contingencies for weeks before Nixon issued his directive. As early as August 5, a full month before the election, Assistant Secretary of State John Crimmins sent Ambassador Korry a secret “eyes only” cable regarding contingency options in the event of Allende's election. “As you can see,” it read, “there are three options in September:”

We want you also to consider a fourth which we are treating separately with very restricted redistribution. This option would be the overthrow or prevention of the inauguration. We would like to have your views on

- A. Prospects of Chilean military and police who would take action to overthrow Allende. . . .
- B. Which elements of the military and police might try and overthrow.
- C. Prospects for success of military and police who try and overthrow Allende or prevent his inauguration.
- D. The importance of U.S. attitude to initiate or success of such an operation.<sup>9</sup>

Korry's response, partially declassified thirty years later, provided a remarkably detailed analysis of the various election scenarios, U.S. options, and expectations. His thirteen-page cable identified all the key elements that would figure in the forthcoming covert efforts to stop Allende: the key time frame between the September 4 election and the October 24 congressional ratification of the winner when a military coup would be possible; the impediment of the strong constitutionalist position of Chilean commander-in-chief General René Schneider, which Korry called the “Schneider Doctrine



of Nonintervention;” and the identification of retired General Roberto Viaux as the military figure most predisposed to move against Allende.<sup>10</sup>

This secret inquiry into the potential for a military coup came as the intelligence community was concluding a “review of U.S. policy and strategy in the event of an Allende victory” for the White House. On Kissinger’s orders, CIA, State, and Defense Department analysts conducted a major study into the implications for the United States. The intelligence assessment they produced in mid-August was called National Security Study Memorandum 97. “Regarding threats to U.S. interests,” NSSM 97 stated clearly, “we conclude that:”

1. The U.S. has no vital national interests within Chile. There would, however, be tangible economic losses.
2. The world military balance of power would not be significantly altered by an Allende government.
3. An Allende victory would, however, create considerable political and psychological costs:
  - a. Hemispheric cohesion would be threatened by the challenge that an Allende government would pose to the OAS, and by the reactions that it would create in other countries. We do not see, however, any likely threat to the peace of the region.
  - b. An Allende victory would represent a definite psychological setback to the U.S. and a definite psychological advance for the Marxist idea.<sup>11</sup>

“In examining the potential threat posed by Allende,” the review for Kissinger added, “it is important to bear in mind that some of the problems foreseen for the United States in the event of his election are likely to arise no matter who becomes Chile’s next president.”

NSSM 97 concluded that an Allende election carried no military, strategic or regional threat to U.S. interests in security and stability. But the report contained a previously undisclosed “covert annex.” A secret CIA supplement titled “Extreme Option—Overthrow Allende,” addressed the assumptions, advantages, and disadvantages of attempting to foster a military coup. “This option assumes that every effort would be made to ensure that the role of the United States was not revealed, and so would require that the action be effected through Chilean institutions, Chileans and third-country nationals,” states the secret position paper drafted by the Agency on August 11. The advantages were clear: “Successful U.S. involvement with a Chilean military

coup would almost certainly permanently relieve us of the possibility of an Allende government in Chile.”

But there were clear disadvantages as well. The most important, according to this analysis, was that

There is almost no way to evaluate the likelihood that such an attempt would be successful even were it made. An unsuccessful attempt, involving as it probably would revelation of U.S. participation, would have grave consequences for our relations with Chile, in the hemisphere, in the United States and elsewhere in the world.<sup>12</sup>

Even if the coup did succeed, these analysts noted in a prescient observation, there was another drawback: “Were the overthrow effort to be successful, and even were U.S. participation to remain covert—which we cannot assure—the United States would become a hostage to the elements we backed in the overthrow and would probably be cut off for years from most other political forces in the country.”<sup>13</sup>

But almost every member of the embassy and intelligence community shared the opinion that fostering a coup in Chile in the fall of 1970 was a nearly impossible, diplomatically dangerous, and undesirable operation. At the September 8 meeting of the high-level national security team known as the 40 Committee that oversaw covert operations, Kissinger and CIA director Helms confronted the State Department argument that a more effective approach would be to focus on rebuilding the Christian Democratic Party for the 1976 Chilean election. The minutes of the meeting record Helms’s acknowledgement “that there was no positive assurance of success [of a coup] because of the apolitical history of the military in Chile” but, in any case, “a military *golpe* against Allende would have little chance of success unless undertaken soon.” Kissinger also voiced his “considerable skepticism that once Allende is in the presidency there w[ould] be anyone capable of organizing any real counterforce against him.” He requested “a cold blooded assessment of . . . the pros and cons and prospects involved should a Chilean military coup be organized now with U.S. assistance.” (Doc 4)

Ambassador Korry’s response was quick and unequivocal. On September 12 he cabled the State Department:

We believe it now clear that Chilean military will not, repeat not move to prevent accession barring unlikely situation of national chaos and widespread violence. . . . What we are saying in this “cold-blooded assessment” is that opportunities for further significant U.S.G. action with the Chilean military are nonexistent. (Doc 5)



On September 25, Korry again cabled Kissinger to reiterate, "I am convinced we cannot provoke [a coup] and that we should not run the risks simply to have another Bay of Pigs."

CIA Chief of Station in Santiago, Henry Hecksher, who used the code name "Felix," provided an equally negative assessment. On September 9, six days before Nixon's decision, Hecksher received a special cable from the CIA's head of the Western Hemisphere William Broe that demonstrates the CIA's early preparation, apparently with White House urging, for plotting a coup. "The only prospect with any chance of success whatsoever is a military *golpe* either before or immediately after Allende's assumption of power," Broe advised. He instructed the CIA Station to undertake "the operational task of establishing those direct contacts with the Chilean military which are required to evaluate possibilities and, at least equally important, could be used to stimulate a *golpe* if and when a decision were made to do so." (Doc 6) The Chief of Station immediately began to implement this order but his reports back to headquarters contained multiple caveats on the difficulties in accomplishing this mission. "Forget about black operations and propagandistic conditioning of Armed Forces. They barely read," Hecksher cabled Langley on September 23. "Bear in mind that parameter of action is exceedingly narrow and available options are quite limited."<sup>14</sup> "I had left no doubt in the minds of my colleagues and superiors," Hecksher would later secretly testify before the Church Committee, "that I did not consider any kind of intervention in those constitutional processes desirable."

In Washington, other officials presented even more comprehensive arguments against the Nixon-Kissinger course of covert action in Chile. In late September, a member of the CIA's Directorate of Operations assessed the Cold War conventional wisdom that U.S. officials had applied to Chile. Far from being a pawn of the Communists, he argued, "Allende will be hard for the Communist Party and for Moscow to control." Moreover, Allende was "no blind follower of Fidel Castro nor do they and their followers agree on everything by any means." Covert operations to stop Allende from becoming president, this analyst predicted, would "be worse than useless:

Any indication that we are behind a legal mickey mouse or some hard-nosed play will exacerbate relations even further with the new government. I am afraid that we will be repeating the errors we made in 1959 and 1960 when we drove Fidel Castro in the Soviet camp. If successful for the moment in denying the UP its candidate, we would bring upon ourselves a much more dangerous civil war in Chile . . . and a much worse image throughout Latin America and the world.<sup>15</sup>

Similar arguments were on Henry Kissinger's desk even before Nixon gave his order to foment a coup. In the late evening of September 4, the day of Allende's election, Kissinger's top aide on Latin America, Viron Vaky, sent him a TOP-SECRET cable arguing that "it is far from given that wisdom would call for covert action programs; the consequences could be disastrous. The cost-benefit-risk ratio is not favorable." On September 14, Vaky presented Kissinger with a SECRET/SENSITIVE memorandum summarizing a CIA position paper on Chile along with analytical comment, conclusions, and recommendations. "Military action is impossible," Vaky reported. "We have no capability to motivate or instigate a coup," he wrote, and "any covert effort to stimulate a military takeover is a nonstarter." Success in blocking Allende would lead to possible "widespread violence and even insurrection," requiring an escalating U.S. involvement in Chile to prop up a substitute government; failure could strengthen and radicalize Allende's forces, and "would be this administration's Bay of Pigs."

Somewhat more courageously, Vaky questioned whether the dangers of an Allende government outweighed the dangers and risks of the probable chain of events Washington would set in motion through covert intervention. He provided this answer:

What we propose is patently a violation of our own principles and policy tenets. Moralism aside, this has practical operational consequences. . . . If these principles have any meaning, we normally depart from them only to meet the gravest threat to us, e.g. to our survival. Is Allende a mortal threat to the U.S.? It is hard to argue this.<sup>16</sup>

## Track I and Track II

In Chile, Latin America, and Washington, Salvador Allende's election on September 4 was a momentous event. His victory set off a frantic, virtually minute-by-minute reaction within the Nixon administration. On election day Ambassador Edward Korry sent no fewer than eighteen updates on the vote count. Those were followed by dozens of lengthy, verbose cables—known in the Department as "Korrygrams" for their unique language and rather undiplomatic opinions—to Washington, blaming the "bumbling, disorganized, naïve, and impotent" character of the centrist Christian Democrats, and the "myopia of arrogant stupidity" of Chile's right-wing upper class for allowing Allende to win. "Leadership depends upon, if I may use Spanish, *cabeza*, *corazon*, and *cojones* (brains, heart, and balls)," Korry wrote disparagingly



in a September 5 cable titled "Allende Wins." "In Chile they counted upon *chachara* (chatter)."

Over the next several weeks, the ambassador sent a constant series of SECRET/NOFORN cables with such titles as "No Hopes for Chile" and "Some Hope for Chile." A number of his field reports identified what Korry skeptically called "the Rube Goldberg contraption," or "an undercover organizational operation" to "constitutionally" block Allende from being ratified by the Chilean Congress on October 24. Through covert political means, the Chilean Congress would be induced to ratify the runner-up candidate, Jorge Alessandri, on October 24; he would then renounce the presidency and initiate new elections in which the outgoing Christian Democrat president Eduardo Frei could run again, and presumably defeat Allende. This scheme was the initial blueprint for what the CIA called "Track I"—the "parliamentary solution." Track II became the internal designation for operations in the aftermath of Nixon's September 15 order to foment, by whatever means possible, a military coup.

The origins of Track I date back to June 18, 1970, when Ambassador Korry proposed that the 40 Committee allocate a contingency slush fund of \$250,000 to bribe members of the Chilean Congress as "Phase II" of a \$360,000 "spoiling operation" against Allende. If no candidate won a majority on September 4, the Chilean Congress would vote to ratify the winner—normally the candidate with the most votes—on October 24. Allende's UP party controlled some eighty-two votes in Congress; to win he would need nineteen additional votes controlled by the Christian Democrats, and could conceivably be ratified even if he were the runner-up. Korry's concern was to assure that the U.S. controlled enough votes among the Christian Democrats to block Allende. The money was approved, but distribution was tabled until after the election.<sup>17</sup>

On September 14, the 40 Committee authorized Korry to spend the \$250,000 for "covert support of projects which Frei or his trusted team deem important." However, the embassy and the CIA soon realized that the potential for exposure made bribery operations too risky—one leak would provoke an anti-American backlash throughout Chile's nationalist political system. The bribery plan was abandoned, but the U.S. continued to covertly pressure the military and the Christian Democrats to orchestrate the so-called "Frei reelection gambit." Within days of Allende's election, Ambassador Korry was meeting with Chilean general Camilo Valenzuela to promote a plan whereby the runner-up, Alessandri, would be ratified; he would form a military cabinet and resign; and the military would oversee new elections between Frei and Allende. But this plan also considered "a nonstarter" after

the CIA determined that there was no way to siphon off enough Congressional votes to ratify Alessandri.

By mid-September the embassy and the CIA were pursuing a scheme that amounted to little more than a Frei-authorized military coup. This plan called for Frei to order the (1) resignation of his cabinet; (2) formation of a new cabinet composed entirely of military figures; (3) appointment of an acting president; and (4) Frei's departure from Chile, leaving the country under effective military control. "The success of such a coup," one CIA status report stated, "would ultimately depend on Frei's total commitment to follow through."

Therein lay the main problem for the success of Track I—Frei's wavering unwillingness to betray Chile's long-standing tradition of civil, constitutional rule. Korry, who met secretly with Frei and his intermediary, Defense Minister Ricardo Ossa, gravitated between lauding the president as the "one and only one hope for Chile," and disparaging him as a man "with no pants on." At the CIA, David Atlee Phillips captured the problematic possibilities of a coup plot based on the voluntarism of Chile's respected president to sacrifice his country's sacred democratic traditions. "The first and fundamental task," he wrote in a September 21 cable to the Station, "is to induce Frei to take action which will produce desired results:"

After this we get fuzzy since we have no clear understanding of what we wish Frei to do other than lead the military coup himself, something we can hardly expect of this too gentle soul. We can wistfully aspire to have him act in a manner which will not only exacerbate climate for a coup but which will actively precipitate it.

According to the declassified "Report on CIA Chilean Task Force Activities," the CIA "mobilized an interlocking political action and propaganda campaign designed to goad and entice Frei" into setting this coup plan in motion. The most superficial of these operations ranged from planting false articles in newspapers around the world stating that the Communists planned "to destroy Frei as an individual and political leader after Allende [took] office"—and then having Frei directly informed of such stories—to orchestrating a series of telegrams to his wife from fictitious women's groups in other Latin American nations beseeching her to help save the region from the horrors of communism. (One CIA cable on Track I, dated October 9, reported that "among influences moving Frei to adopt stronger course is 'sudden change in character of Mrs. Frei.' ") Far more sinister and violent



operations designed to “influence Frei’s frame of mind” were conducted in tangent with Track II coup plotting.

The historical distinction between Track I and Track II—that the first favored a constitutional approach and the second focused on a military coup to block Allende—is inaccurate. Track I quickly evolved to focus on a military takeover as well—what the CIA’s deputy director for covert operations (DDP) Tom Karamessines called “a quiet and hopefully nonviolent military coup.” In a September 21 cable covering both Tracks I and II, the CIA Task Force director informed the chief of Station in Santiago that the “purpose of exercise is to prevent Allende assumption of power. Parliamentary legerdemain has been discarded. Military solution is objective.”

The main difference between the two approaches was that Track I required Frei’s participation and involved Ambassador Korry’s efforts to pressure the Chilean president to give a green light to the Chilean military. Track II focused on identifying any Chilean military officer, active duty or retired, willing to lead a violent *putsch*, and providing whatever incentive, rationale, direction, coordination, equipment, and funding necessary to provoke a successful overthrow of Chilean democracy. The Track II component of Project FUBELT was highly compartmentalized; most members of the 40 Committee were not aware of its existence. (Following 40 Committee meetings, Kissinger would meet with a much smaller group of CIA and NSC officials knowledgeable of FUBELT.) On Nixon’s orders, Ambassador Korry and his staff were excluded from knowledge and participation in this set of operations.<sup>18</sup>

Track II operations began with Broe’s September 9 cable to Hecksher, and accelerated with Nixon’s September 15 mandate. The Chile Task Force, which also coordinated Track I, immediately set up a special communications channel with the chief of Station. Additional agents were dispatched to Santiago, according to “Project FUBELT Situation Report #1” to “augment the Station strength.” DDP Karamessines, WH/C Broe, and Task Force Chief David Atlee Phillips began meeting every day; the Task Force kept a daily log of activity, and filed frequent situation reports on the status of the Chile operations.<sup>19</sup> Under “constant, constant, just constant pressure . . . from the White House,” according to CIA officials, Karamessines periodically briefed Kissinger and his deputy Alexander Haig on the progress of fomenting a military coup in Chile.

CIA pursued a basic three-step plan: (1) identify, contact, and collect intelligence on coup-minded officers; (2) inform them that the U.S. was committed to “full support in coup” short of sending the marines; and (3) foster the creation of “a coup climate by propaganda, disinformation and terrorist activities” to provide a stimulus and pretext for the military to move.

Even before Nixon's coup directive, the chief of Station had begun to contact select members of the Chilean military. But the Station had limited access and no close relations within the officer corps. (The second "Situation Report" on Track II refers to a CIA inquiry to all its covert operatives for anyone with prior contacts among the Chilean military.) Indeed, at the initiation of Project FUBELT, the CIA had only two "assets"—paid agents—in the Chilean military. For that reason, the Agency recruited the services of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) military attaché in Chile, Colonel Paul Wimert, who, according to a Task Force Report "enjoyed unusually close, frank, and confidential relationships" with potential coup plotters. On September 29, Wimert received a secret message from the DIA acting director, Lt. Gen. Jamie Philpott, sent via the CIA's Chile Task Force, ordering him to "work closely with the CIA chief . . . in contacting and advising the principal military figures who might play a decisive role in any move which might, eventually, deny the presidency to Allende. Do not, repeat not, advise the Ambassador," Wimert was instructed.<sup>20</sup>

The CIA also mobilized a small elite unit of four special agents—known as "false flaggers," or the "illegal team." These operatives, "chosen for their ability to assume non-U.S. nationality," according to internal CIA summaries of Track II, operated under extreme deep cover, posing as Spanish-speaking Latin Americans; their use was intended for "those contacts with the highest risk potential, that is, those individuals whose credentials, reliability, and security quotient were unproven and unknown"—to safeguard against exposure. "Headquarters proposed establishing small staff of false-flag officers in Santiago to handle high risk target-of-opportunity activities," records the September 28 entry in the CIA's daily log on Track II.

Together, Hecksher, Wimert, and the false-flag officers made some two-dozen contacts with Chilean military and police officials from late September to late October. The message passed to all of them was that the United States intended to cut military assistance to Chile unless they moved against Allende, and that the U.S. desired, and would actively support, a coup. As the CIA Task Force instructed Wimert to tell key Chilean generals: "High authority in Washington has authorized you to offer material support short of armed intervention to Chilean armed forces in any endeavors they may undertake to prevent the election of Allende on October 24, his inauguration on 4 November, or his subsequent overthrow."

Initially, the CIA targeted several active duty officers, among them Brig. Gen. Camilo Valenzuela, commander of the Santiago barracks, air force General Joaquin García, and a high commander of Chile's police forces, the Carabineros, believed to be General Vicente Huerta as likely coup leaders. They also evaluated the potential of retired General Arturo Marshall, a fanatical



extremist dedicated to terrorism that included bombings in Santiago and the actual assassination of Allende. But, in the Station's opinion, the "only military leader of national stature [who] appears committed to denying Allende the presidency by force" was Roberto Viaux, a disgruntled commander who had attempted a takeover in 1969 against Frei.<sup>21</sup>

Yet coup plotting remained problematic. General Viaux was retired after his unsuccessful coup attempt and therefore commanded no actual troops; one high-level CIA source discounted him as a "man who could lead a coup attempt that fails with resulting carnage." General Marshall, who the CIA met with and passed funds to, was quickly deemed too unstable and contact was dropped "because of his extremist tendencies," according to CIA reporting. And the active-duty officers were immobilized by their own commander in chief, General René Schneider, who had publicly stated his position in support of a constitutional transfer of power. "While Frei has been exploring with the military the possibilities for intervening, and realizes that General Schneider is the major stumbling block," noted a CIA special situation report dated October 2, "he has not yet been able to muster the courage to neutralize Schneider or send him out of the country." Frei, David Atlee Phillips complained in a cable to the Santiago Station the same day, "is waiting for the military to depose him. However, the constitutionalist-minded Chilean military are waiting for Frei to give them instructions to stage a coup. Thus, they are in a stalemate." In another cable three days later, the Task Force director predicted "only economic chaos or serious civil disorder is likely to alter the military posture."

### "Flashpoint for Action": Creating a Coup Climate

To implement President Nixon's order to foment a coup, the CIA faced what Director Helms described as "the impossible" challenges of forcing President Frei to move against the democratic structures of his own nation, "neutralizing," if necessary, Chile's respected commander-in-chief, General Schneider, and overcoming what agency records called "the apolitical, constitutional-oriented inertia of the Chilean military." Moreover, there existed no reason, no justification, nor even a pretext for the military to move to block Allende's Popular Unity coalition from taking office. In reality, the vast majority of Chileans were at peace with the outcome of their political process. "There is now no peg for a military move," as the Station reported on September 29, "in face of the complete calm prevailing throughout the country."

In the most sinister set of operations related to Tracks I and II, the CIA, with the help of the embassy and the White House, actively set out to change

tranquility into turmoil in order to foster a “coup climate” in Chile. The objective was to instigate such socioeconomic crisis and upheaval that Frei and/or the military would be prompted to act. “We conclude that it is our task to create such a climate climaxing with a solid pretext that will force the military and the president to take some action in the desired direction,” Broe and Phillips informed the Santiago Station on September 28 in a cable that provides a covert blueprint for how the CIA intended to foment a coup in Chile. (Doc 7) “We should direct our attention in a systematic fashion to the three main and interlinked thrusts of a program designed to: (a) force Frei to act or go; (b) create an atmosphere in which he or others can act successfully; (c) assist in creating the flashpoint for action.”

The three “thrusts” for the “creation of coup climate” consisted of “economic warfare,” “political warfare,” and “psychological warfare.” If successful in “heightening tension” through those three sets of operations, the CIA strategists suggested, a pretext for a coup would somehow present itself—“the one act that will force massive Communist reaction and/or public outrage,” as Broe and Phillips hoped and predicted. “We can be looking for the opportunity and when the time comes spark it.”

From the first day of Project FUBELT, real and threatened economic pressure were considered key components of coup strategy—“to make the economy scream,” in Nixon’s now famous words. Situation Report # 1, for example, called for the CIA to “begin immediately to determine just what economic pressure tactics can be employed.” In a special cable to Kissinger, who was traveling with the president in Europe in early October, Richard Helms noted that “a suddenly disastrous economic situation would be the most logical pretext for a military move,” and that “the only practical way to create the tense atmosphere in which Frei could muster the courage to act is to see to it that the Chilean economy, precarious enough since the election, takes a drastic turn for the worse.” According to Helms: “At least a mini-crisis is required.”

Both CIA and State Department officials enlisted the support and help of U.S. businesses with interests in Chile. In late September, Korry convened an embassy meeting with a large group of corporate representatives to discuss the situation. He also met with a Frei intermediary, Defense Minister Ossa, and passed a dramatic warning: “Not a nut or bolt will be allowed to reach Chile under Allende. We shall do all within our power to condemn Chile and the Chilean to utmost deprivation and poverty. . . . hence, for Frei to believe that there will be much of an alternative to utter misery, such as seeing Chile muddle through, would be strictly illusionary.”

In a discussion with one unidentified official, Korry discussed a series of hostile economic steps that might contribute to a rapid slowdown in the



economy and provoke a military reaction. On September 24, Korry cabled Washington with a number of ideas and proposals: starting rumors of imminent rationing to create a “run on food stocks;” asking U.S. banks to suddenly halt renewal of credit to Chile; getting “U.S. companies here to foot-drag to maximum possible . . . hold off on orders, on deliveries of spare parts”; spreading false information that Chilean building and loan associations were near bankruptcy, and pressing several major U.S. corporations to declare publicly that they were closing down their Chilean operations. Korry followed up on September 25 with an additional list of recommendations that included putting pressure on the U.S. mining giant, Anaconda Copper, to take a hard line on an ongoing miners strike; circulating propaganda that an Allende government would seek to block “technical and managerial talent” from leaving Chile, spurring an exodus of such personnel now; pressuring Ford Motor Co. to pull out of Chile, and Bank of America to close its doors, which in Korry’s opinion, “would provide sharp blow to Chilean banking circles and dry up one source of credit.”<sup>22</sup>

High-level State Department officials did meet with corporate executives at Ford and Bank of America to enlist their support. The CIA, in turn, stepped up its collaboration with the most anti-Allende of U.S. corporations—the International Telephone and Telegraph Co. ITT had holdings of \$153 million in Chile—it owned the telephone company, two Sheraton hotels, and Standard Electric among other properties—making it the third largest American conglomerate in that nation. Certainly ITT was the most interventionist. In mid-July, weeks before Allende’s election, ITT board member and former CIA director John McCone had placed a call to his successor, Richard Helms, and suggested ongoing communications and collaboration between ITT and the CIA to undermine Allende’s candidacy. A series of high-level meetings ensued, according to leaked corporate papers, including a meeting on September 11 between McCone, Helms, and Kissinger during which ITT offered \$1 million “for the purpose of assisting any [U.S.] government plan . . . to stop Allende.”<sup>23</sup> On September 29, the CIA’s William Broe met with ITT senior vice president Edward Gerrity to “explore the feasibility of possible actions to apply some economic pressure on Chile.” While the CIA has not released its memorandum of conversation on this meeting—one of some forty contacts between highest-level CIA and ITT officials on Chile in 1970 and 1971—Gerrity’s report to company CEO Harold Geneen stated that the CIA official had presented a plan “aimed at inducing economic collapse” in Chile.<sup>24</sup> In a phone call to Geneen the same day, the CIA supervisor of Project FUBELT, Tom Karamessines, covered the same issues.

As part of the campaign of economic pressure, the CIA also pushed for

direct pressure against other major countries with strong economic ties to Chile. On the eve of President Nixon's meeting in London with British Prime Minister Edward Heath, Helms sent a cable to Kissinger concerning "the [British] role in the Chilean economic scene." A TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE memorandum of conversation captured Nixon telling Heath on October 3 "he wanted the British to give no encouragement to the idea that this [Allende] government might prove acceptable until the die is cast." As Nixon added, "he hoped the British would suspend loans and other matters of this kind."<sup>25</sup> At the meeting of the 40 Committee on October 6, Kissinger noted that "higher authority" had been "advising heads of state in Europe of the absolute undesirability of an Allende regime in Chile."

By early October, the Nixon administration had taken a number of steps to destabilize Chile's economy. In the financial sector, one pending export-import bank loan was deferred; the bank had been secretly instructed to downgrade Chile's credit rating to restrict further credit transactions. A major loan for cattle farming was delayed. All new Inter-American Development Bank loans would be deferred. Bank of America had agreed to restrict additional credit lines. Further discussions with executives at ITT to coordinate and pressure other U.S. companies to limit their operations in Chile were planned.<sup>26</sup>

Political warfare, in the form of propaganda placements and mobilization of CIA-controlled organization and assets also accelerated. The CIA effort was intended to isolate Allende's Popular Unity coalition by directing and financing negative statements by political and civic leaders, anti-Allende rallies, and hostile media, through CIA-owned or -supported newspapers, radio stations, and television assets. In addition, the Station was also directed to conduct multiple "black propaganda" operations—planting false but provocative information about Allende's plans in the press and inside the military. In early October, for example, the Station was told to create and plant fictitious intelligence reports on how Chile's intelligence services would "be re-organized along the Soviet/Cuban mold thus creating the structure for a police state."

"The key is the psych war within Chile," CIA officials stressed. "We cannot endeavor to ignite the world if Chile itself is a placid lake. The fuel for the fire must come from within Chile. Therefore, the Station should employ every stratagem, every ploy, however bizarre, to create this internal resistance." (Doc 7) The tactics of CIA-instigated psychological warfare ranged from the superfluous to the sinister. On October 7, Phillips and Broe directed the Station to "begin at once a rumor campaign, based whenever possible on tangible peg, which will help create this [coup] climate. Suggest you assign false flag officers task of getting out to bars and planting at least



three rumors each day for next ten days. Believe Station can provide this grist for rumor mill easily.”<sup>27</sup> In another, and far more sinister, cable dated the same day the Station was ordered to consider instigating “terrorist” activities that might provoke Allende’s followers.

Almost all references to the use of terrorism have been redacted from the declassified CIA records, but they do contain enough information to show that terrorist acts were part of the effort to create a coup climate. The Task Force Daily logs show that the Agency was monitoring and providing small amounts of funding for the actions of a neofascist group, *Patria y Libertad*. An October 6 CIA status report noted that the Station had contacted “a representative of an anticommunist group intent on organizing terrorist activities”—a reference to a false-flagger meeting with retired General Arturo Marshall—and “this group is allegedly counting on the leadership of General Viaux.” The daily log for October 10 noted that Viaux “intends to increase the level of terrorism in Santiago over the weekend. The objective of this activity is to provoke the UP into retaliatory violence and public disorder.” (Doc 8)

Ironically, the most forceful advocate against plotting with Viaux and other Chilean military officials was the U.S. ambassador. On October 6 Korry heard about military coup plotting through his own sources and once again ordered Hecksher and Wimert to stay away from all Chilean military figures. “I am appalled to discover that there is liaison for [deleted] coup plotting,” he angrily cabled Kissinger. “The military will not carry out a coup to put Viaux in power. Nor is there a public mood that would provide a moral justification for a coup. . . . In sum, I think any attempt on our part actively to encourage a coup could lead us to a Bay of Pigs failure.” An abortive coup, Korry warned, “would be an unrelieved disaster for the U.S. . . . and do the gravest harm to U.S. interests throughout Latin America if not beyond.”

In Washington, Korry’s advice was ignored, and Kissinger immediately overruled the ambassador’s orders to the CIA. At the 40 Committee meeting of October 6, Kissinger directed that Korry’s instructions to cease all contacts with the Chilean military be “rescinded forthwith.”

At the same October 6 meeting, Kissinger pressed the CIA to instigate the coup. He pointed out that “there were only eighteen days left and that some drastic action was called for to shock the Chileans into action.” His pressure resulted in a sharply worded Chile Task Force directive to the Station the next day. This unique cable, signed for emphasis by the DCI, Richard Helms, ordered the Station to “sponsor a military move” using “all available assets and stratagems” to create a coup climate. “Every hour counts,” the cable

stated; “all other considerations are secondary.” “Contact the military and let them know the USG wants a military solution,” the instructions read, “and that we will support them now and later.” (Doc 9)

Under extreme pressure to come up with a “shock” to instigate upheaval, the CIA Station arrived at what it called “the only viable solution for blocking Allende”—the “Viaux solution,” a military action by retired general Roberto Viaux. Viaux’s value to the CIA as a coup catalyst was apparent to the agency at the start of Project FUBELT; in the very first situation report on September 16, the Task Force noted that one way to “stimulate unrest” would be to “determine whether General Viaux [could be] induced to take action which would cause Communist reaction and in turn force military hand.” A viable Viaux plan could also become leverage to push Frei to “seize the bull by the horns and act,” asserted one CIA proposal; Frei would be told that “a Viaux coup would only produce a massive bloodbath” and “though preferable to Allende, would be a tragedy for Chile.”

Through a foreign intermediary, the CIA first contacted Viaux on October 5. A second, more substantive contact was then made through a member of the false-flagger team. The Track II daily log for October 9 stated that a “false flag staffer was instructed to contact General Viaux. This officer will offer Viaux moral, financial, and material (arms) support in behalf of an unidentified U.S. group.”

Two of the four-member “false-flag” team who served as a liaison with Viaux and his group can now be identified as Anthony Sforza and Bruce MacMasters. MacMasters was based out of the CIA’s Mexico City Station; Sforza was a legendary deep cover agent who had spent twenty years operating throughout Latin America, Europe, and Asia pretending to be a Mafia-connected smuggler and using the alias Henry J. Sloman; he had also been working in Mexico City on a top-secret CIA operation against Fidel Castro’s regime in Cuba known by the code name JKLANCE. MacMasters entered Chile using a false passport from Colombia. In his half-dozen contacts with Viaux and his men, according to a still classified CIA memorandum, he introduced himself as “a Colombian businessman,” and told them he was “representing American business interests such as the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and other unidentified business groups.” Sforza passed himself off as an Argentine with connections to Latin American business.

In his initial meetings with the Viaux conspirators, Sforza obtained details on their needs and military strategy. Among the equipment the retired general requested was riot control and crowd dispersal weapons and immediate U.S. assistance after the new regime was installed. “Viaux expects some



10,000 casualties in Santiago area before leftist mobs are put down,” the false flagger reported to Hecksher. In his analysis, the Station chief predicted the evolution of events that Viaux’s coup effort would set in motion:

He can split armed forces, with certain army units siding with him and others rallying around Schneider, i.e. Allende. Militant effectives of Unidad Popular will side with loyalist troops. Strength estimates as to opposing camps speculative to warrant serious effort. Fencesitters will watch tide of battle before engaging themselves on either side. Carnage could be considerable and prolonged, i.e. civil war.

“You have asked us to provoke chaos in Chile,” Hecksher’s cable concluded. “Thru Viaux solution, we provide you with formula for chaos which is unlikely to be bloodless.”<sup>28</sup>

### The Assassination of General Schneider

It was Ambassador Korry who first pointed out on September 21, 1970 that to block Allende’s ascension to the presidency, “General Schneider would have to be neutralized, by displacement if necessary.” The commander in chief, and his “Schneider Doctrine” of nonintervention in Chilean politics, constituted “the main barrier to all plans for the military to take over the government,” according to CIA reporting. “What does Viaux plan to do to neutralize the Alto Mando [High Command]? What is to keep Schneider from making statement in early hours which will freeze those military leaders who might otherwise join Viaux?” CIA headquarters cabled the Station on October 13. In another cable, Broe and Phillips queried Hecksher on how to “remove” General Schneider: “anything we or Station can do to effect the removal of Schneider? We know this [is a] rhetorical question but want to inspire thought on both ends on this matter.”<sup>29</sup>

The answer was to kidnap him. On October 7, the U.S. military attaché, Colonel Wimert, first discussed this idea with members of Chile’s war academy, a military institution headed by General Alfredo Canales who would become an active coup plotter. On October 8, the CIA Station chief also discussed the possibility of Schneider’s “abduction” with a high-ranking member of Chile’s Carabinero police. The false flaggers, Sforza and MacMasters, had discussions with the Viaux group about a kidnap plot. On October 13, a Viaux representative called to report that an “attempt will be made to remove General Schneider within the next forty-eight hours” in order to precipitate a coup.

On paper, the plan to kidnap Schneider appeared to potentially kill numerous birds with one stone. It removed the most powerful opponent of a *golpe* from the top military post; that post would then be filled with a military figure sympathetic to a coup; the kidnapping would be blamed on leftist extremists, undermining Allende's integrity; and the ensuing public outrage would create the "coup climate" and the justification the CIA had been seeking for a military takeover. The problem confronting the CIA was whether Viaux actually had the ability to pull off a kidnapping and a military *putsch*.

In the early meetings with Viaux, he demanded that the false flaggers—appropriately referred to as "sponsors" in the cable traffic—establish their bona fides by air-dropping weapons to his group and providing the plotters with "life and physical disability policies immediately," as the Santiago Station reported. (In a second meeting on October 10, Viaux requested "five blank policies up to \$50,000 U.S. currency and twenty other policies up to \$25,000.") Headquarters responded that an arms drop was risky, particularly given the lack of knowledge of Viaux's capabilities. The Task Force ordered Hecksher to have a false flagger "recontact Viaux and offer him . . . sufficient funds to impress Viaux with bona fides. Money is to buy arms, bribe arsenal commanders to provide arms, or to acquire them in any fashion he can." Broe and Phillips also directed the Station to gather intelligence on "whether Viaux coup has any chance of success on its own or whether could trigger larger coup."<sup>30</sup>

On October 11, a member of the "illegal" team, Anthony Sforza, met with Viaux and his group several times. That evening, Sforza conferred with MacMasters in the bar of the Hotel Carrera—a meeting the CIA considered a major security breach because the false-flag agents were not supposed to be seen together. The next day, Sforza departed Santiago for CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia, for a "debriefing" with Broe and Phillips on the renegade general's capabilities and demands. "We have debriefed [Sforza]. Believe it imperative that Viaux be recontacted ASAP, by another false flagger"—MacMasters took over Sforza's contacts after he left—the task force directors cabled on October 13th. The airdrops and "paralyzing gas" Viaux had requested could not be furnished, but the "sponsors" could pledge \$250,000 for insurance purposes. Headquarters suggested that the Station "keep Viaux movement financially lubricated" while the CIA tried to coordinate his activities with other coup plotters.<sup>31</sup>

"The prospects for a coup may have improved significantly in the last twenty-four hours," states the October 14 task force log on Track II. "Last week General Viaux appeared to be the only military leader committed to blocking Allende. Now we are beginning to see signs of increased coup activity from other military quarters." Intelligence gathering indicated that mil-



itary units in Concepcion and Valdivia “were ready to move against the government.” And CIA contacts with high-level active-duty military officers, among them navy Adm. Hugo Tirado, army Gen. Alfredo Canales, and Brig. Gen. Camilo Valenzuela were yielding signals of a willingness to move. In a discussion that Henry Hecksher described as “uninhibited” and in “complete candor” with one such official, the Station chief passed on U.S. intelligence on the ability of Allende’s supporters to resist—they “could not hold out for more than sixteen hours”—and assured the Chilean military commander that after the coup

the U.S.G. would promptly transact with military Junta . . . we would be most comprehending. Obviously we could not allow armed forces to deteriorate and prompt measures would be taken to modernize its plant. Military should not worry about image they present abroad and ignore lament of public opinion in democratic nations.

With active-duty officers now involved in coup plotting, the CIA Task Force became concerned that Viaux might move precipitously, and undercut chances for a successful military operation. “It became evident,” the CIA Task Force postmortem on Track II noted, “that Viaux did not have the organization or support to carry out a successful coup, but might trigger prematurely an action that would spoil the better chances of doing so from within the active military itself.”

Faced with a tactical decision on whether to try to get Viaux to hold off until active-duty officers were ready, the CIA came under renewed pressure to act from the highest authority in the U.S. government. In a secret White House meeting with Karamessines and Kissinger between 10:59 and 11:09 A.M. on October 13—the same day Viaux had told agents in Chile that Schneider would be kidnapped within forty-eight hours—President Nixon explicitly reissued his orders to block Allende from becoming president. As Karamessines recalled the meeting, the “president went out of his way to impress all of those there with his conviction that it was absolutely essential that the election of Mr. Allende to the presidency be thwarted.” As they were leaving the Oval Office, Karamessines later testified, “the president took [me] aside to reiterate the message.”<sup>32</sup>

Two days later, Nixon passed the same message to Ambassador Edward Korry who had been recalled to Washington for consultations. “That son of a bitch, that son of a bitch,” the ambassador recalls the president swearing while striking his fist against his open palm as Korry and Kissinger entered the Oval Office at 12:54 P.M. on October 15. When Nixon saw the per-

plexed expression on Korry's face, he exclaimed: "Not you, Mr. Ambassador. It's that son of a bitch Allende. We're going to smash him." For the duration of the twenty-one-minute meeting, Korry (who remained unaware of the president's orders to the CIA on Track II) shared his evaluation with Nixon and Kissinger that Allende's ratification was a *fait accompli*, and that any covert effort to foment a military coup would backfire on U.S. international interests. "Mr. President," as Korry remembers giving advice Nixon did not want to hear, "I tell it like it is."<sup>33</sup>

Several hours later, at 4:30 P.M., Kissinger met with Karamessines at the White House for an update on Project FUBELT. In preparation for the meeting, the CIA's senior officer on Track II drafted a memorandum on the "Probable Reaction to an Unsuccessful Viaux Coup," focusing on the implications for the United States (which would be blamed), the radicalization of a future Allende government, and the decreased "prospects for a postinaugural coup." (Doc 10) He told Kissinger that "Viaux did not have more than [a] one chance in twenty—perhaps less—to launch a successful coup." According to minutes of the meeting, Kissinger and Karamessines reviewed together the repercussions of a failed coup and decided "that the Agency must get a message to Viaux warning him against any precipitate action."

Later, after the details of the Schneider operation and Track II were publicly revealed, Kissinger would repeatedly claim that he "turned off" all coup plotting at this October 15 meeting. In his still classified testimony before the Church Committee on August 12, 1975, Kissinger asserted that after that meeting "In my mind, Track II was finished." In his memoirs, *Years of Renewal*, he wrote "On October 15, I called off Track II before it was ever implemented."

But the detailed declassified documents relating to the October 15 meeting do not record any directive to terminate Track II; rather, according to the meeting minutes, Kissinger approved "the decision to de-fuse the Viaux coup plot, *at least temporarily*," (emphasis added). He authorized a message to Viaux stating: "preserve your assets . . . The time will come when you with all your friends can do something. You will continue to have our support." The memorandum of conversation of the October 15, 1970, meeting contained Kissinger's instructions to Karamessines "to preserve Agency assets in Chile, working clandestinely and securely to maintain the capability for Agency operations against Allende in the future." (Doc 11) Finally, the meeting concluded on

Dr. Kissinger's note that the Agency should continue keeping the pressure on every Allende weak spot in sight—now, after the 24th of Oc-



tober, after 5 November, and into the future until such time as new marching orders are given. Mr. Karamessines stated that the Agency would comply.

Far from turning off Track II, Kissinger's marching orders were to continue the covert pressure "on every Allende weak spot"—up to the Congressional ratification and inauguration, and thereafter. In a cable the next day to the Santiago Station, Karamessines transmitted this reaffirmed mandate. "[FUBELT] policy, objectives, and actions were reviewed at high USG level afternoon 15 October. Conclusions, which are to be your operational guide, follow:"

It is firm and continuing policy that Allende be overthrown by a coup. It would be much preferable to have this transpire prior to 24 October but efforts in this regard will continue vigorously beyond this date. We are to continue to generate maximum pressure toward this end utilizing every appropriate resource. It is imperative that these actions be implemented clandestinely and securely so that the USG and American hand be well hidden. (Doc 12)

The cable ordered the Station to pass a message to Viaux—using the exact language that was worked out with Kissinger. The Station was to encourage him to "amplify his planning" and "join forces with other coup plotters." Headquarters ordered Hecksher to

Review all your present and possibly new activities to include propaganda, black operations, surfacing of intelligence or disinformation, personal contacts, or anything else your imagination can conjure which will permit you to continue to press forward toward our [FUBELT] objective.

Beyond Viaux's problematic prospects, the CIA had briefed Kissinger on the activities of several active-duty military officers, including Admiral Tirado and General Canales, who were also engaged in coup plotting. But although Kissinger ordered the Agency to keep the pressure on, he emerged from his October 15 meetings with both Karamessines and Korry pessimistic that the CIA would be able to block Allende's accession to the presidency. At 5:58 that evening, according to President Nixon's Oval Office logs, Kissinger called to tell him that the CIA's main coup gambit was not viable. Kissinger's "telcons"—transcripts of his telephone conversations—record him as informing the president that because of the risks the Viaux plot would not succeed,

“I turned it off. Nothing would be worse than an abortive coup.”<sup>34</sup> Three days later, on October 18, Kissinger sent a comprehensive seven-page action memorandum to Nixon, “Subject: Chile—Immediate Operational Issues,” broaching the broad and specific policy decisions necessary for undermining an Allende government. “Our capacity to engineer Allende’s overthrow quickly has been demonstrated to be sharply limited,” Kissinger wrote in an oblique reference to Project FUBELT “It now appears certain that Allende will be elected President of Chile in the October 24 Congressional run-off elections.” Kissinger’s SECRET/SENSITIVE memo recommended the president and NSC consider a longer-term “adversary strategy” and “action program” as soon as Nixon’s schedule permitted.<sup>35</sup>

Ironically, at the very moment Kissinger and Nixon began to strategize on how to overthrow a post-inaugural Allende government, the CIA’s efforts to foment a preemptive strike finally seemed to be yielding results. “At last, the military is pulling itself together in an effort to deny Allende the presidency,” noted a CIA “special situation report” on October 19. “Apparently a number of senior military leaders (General Valenzuela [deleted names of other coconspirators]) have joined together and have agreed to move against the government.”

By then, a full-fledged coup conspiracy led by General Valenzuela in collaboration with Admiral Tirado and retired General Viaux, had taken shape. On October 17, at a late-evening clandestine meeting with U.S. military attaché Paul Wimert, two of Valenzuela’s deputies requested that “[Wimert] arrange [to] furnish them with eight to ten tear gas grenades,” according to a CIA cable. “Within forty-eight hours they need three 45-caliber machine guns (‘grease guns’) with 500 rounds ammo each.” When a CIA false flagger met with Viaux’s group on October 18 to “de-fuse” their plotting, the Agency operative was told that the plan to kidnap Schneider was going forward the next night as the “first link” in a “chain of events.” In a separate conversation at 10:30 P.M. that evening, Valenzuela told Wimert that Viaux was “knowledgeable of [the] operation” and briefed the U.S. military attaché on the progression of events that would bring the military to power.

On the evening of October 19, Valenzuela advised, General Schneider would attend an army VIP “stag party” at the house of the commander-in-chief of the army on Presidente Errazuriz Street. As Schneider left the party he would be kidnapped. Schneider’s abduction would begin the following progression of events to establish an anti-Allende military regime:

1. After arriving at the house, Schneider would be abducted.
2. He would be taken to a waiting airplane and flown to Argentina.
3. Valenzuela would announce that Schneider had “disappeared.”



4. The military would blame the kidnapping on leftists and would “institute a search for Schneider in all of Chile, using this search as a pretext to raid Communist-controlled poblaciones [neighborhoods].”
5. The military command would be shuffled to put coup plotters in positions of power.
6. Frei would resign and leave Chile.
7. A new military Junta would “be installed” headed by Admiral Hugo Tirado.
8. The Junta would dissolve Congress. (Doc 13)

To kidnap Schneider, Valenzuela said, the plotters would need to pay \$50,000 to an unidentified team of abductors—money that the CIA Station subsequently authorized Wimert to provide.

The October 19 kidnapping attempt failed. Schneider’s police security detail at the party was supposed to withdraw, allowing the kidnappers to act, but did not do so; instead of leaving in his official Mercedes, Schneider took his personal car and the abduction team “became nervous due to inexperience,” the Station cabled. On October 20, Wimert’s military contact reported that another kidnapping attempt was now underway. Schneider was to be intercepted while leaving the Ministry of Defense during rush hour. But the kidnappers got stuck in traffic and lost sight of his car.<sup>36</sup> Headquarters requested that the station “continue to assure Valenzuela and the others with whom he has been in contact that USG support for anti-Allende action continues.”

Late the next day, the six submachine guns and ammunition arrived via the embassy’s diplomatic pouch—specially wrapped and falsely labeled to disguise what they were from State Department officials. (Doc 14) It took the Station almost twenty-four hours to arrange a clandestine transfer. At 2:00 A.M. on October 22, Colonel Wimert drove to a desolate spot in Santiago to deliver the weapons to a Chilean army officer waiting in his vehicle.

Only hours later, at 8:00 A.M., Schneider’s chauffeur-driven car was deliberately struck and stopped by a jeep as he drove to military headquarters in Santiago. Five individuals then surrounded his car; one used a sledgehammer to break in the rear window. Schneider was shot three times at close range. Despite emergency open-heart surgery, he died on the morning of October 25.<sup>37</sup>

The CIA’s initial reaction to the shooting is reflected in the cold-blooded cable traffic between the Station and headquarters. Hecksher transmitted a report indicating some uncertainty about who was actually responsible but offering hope that the conditions were now propitious for a coup. “We know that Gen. Valenzuela was involved . . . but cannot prove or disprove that execution of attempt against Schneider was entrusted to elements linked with

Viaux,” he wrote. “All we can say is that attempt against Schneider is affording armed forces one last opportunity to prevent Allende’s election. . . .” After briefing DCI Richard Helms, the Task Force directors Broe and Phillips sent back a cable of commendation: “The Station has done excellent job of guiding Chileans to point today where a military solution is at least an option for them. COS [and others involved] are commended for accomplishing this under extremely difficult and delicate circumstances.” (Doc 15)

“Valenzuela’s group coup plan has been put into action,” CIA Task Force analysts noted in a pair of “Special Reports” on the “Machine Gun Assault on General Schneider.” The Task Force analysts optimistically asserted that “the die has been cast,” and the coup plotters had “gone beyond the point of no return.” If Allende assumed power the role of the military in the Schneider operation would become known, according to this analysis. Therefore, the coup plotters had only two options: “try and force Frei to resign or they can attempt to assassinate Allende!”<sup>38</sup> “With only twenty-four hours remaining before the Congressional run-off, a coup climate exists in Chile,” proclaimed one of the final task force situation reports on Track II dated October 23. In the CIA’s estimation, all the elements to complete Project FUBELT had fallen into place:

Schneider has been removed, a state of emergency has been declared, General Prats has replaced General Schneider, radicals have been arrested, and General Valenzuela has assumed control of Santiago Province. [deleted] Although the plotters may have second thoughts about a coup, they nonetheless are irrevocably committed to executing the plot—even if Frei refuses to resign—since it can be assumed that their plotting would eventually surface under an Allende government. Hence they have no alternative but to move ahead. The state of emergency and the establishment of martial law have significantly improved the plotters [sic] position: *a coup climate now prevails in Chile.* [emphasis added]

### Covering up the U.S. Role

On October 24, 1970, the Chilean Congress overwhelmingly ratified Salvador Allende as president. The vote count was 153, which included all seventy-four Christian Democrat Senators and Congressmen, to thirty-seven votes from the Nationalist Party delegates for runner-up Jorge Allesandri. Far from fostering a coup climate, the Schneider shooting produced an overwhelming public and political repudiation of violence and a clear reaffirmation of Chile’s civil, constitutional tradition. The CIA’s self-serving predictions of an obliga-



tory Allende assassination or military move to take power proved to be quite incorrect.

For several days, Agency reports bemoaned that fact that “there are no indications that Valenzuela or Viaux’s group are planning a coup before 3 November”—the date of Allende’s inauguration. But most of the CIA’s official attention after the assassination focused on a “security review” of FUBELT to ascertain its vulnerabilities to exposure. The declassified record shows considerable concern about news articles on the Schneider operation, based on sources inside the coup plotters’ camps, that appeared in the *Washington Post* and Latin American press, including an extremely detailed and accurate expose in *Prensa Latina* published in Havana, Cuba. As conspirators, including Viaux, were identified and arrested, the CIA conducted a detailed assessment of the dozens of contacts and communications between the false flaggers, Wimert, Station personnel, the embassy, and Chilean coup plotters from late September and late October. The Task Force produced comprehensive chronological lists on “Contacts with Chilean Military,” “Individuals Witting of Coup Attempt and Degree of Knowledge,” and “Station Feelers and Contacts with Viaux Group”—in order to anticipate and evaluate potential trouble spots and leaks.<sup>39</sup>

Two key problems concerned the CIA: first, that Viaux “may not want to be fall guy” for the killing and could implicate the U.S. One of the false flaggers, the Station determined, had given Viaux a written message that could potentially prove a U.S. role. Second and more importantly, a Chilean military officer still had the CIA machine guns, and ammunition that Colonel Wimert had given him—apparently hidden in his house. On October 29, headquarters requested that Wimert “manage to regain possession of material.” But the Chilean official resisted, arguing that the guns might be useful in the future. He promised, according to one CIA memorandum of conversation, “to take special care in hiding hardware and remove telltale indicators of origin such as fingerprints.” On November 5, Broe sent another cable reiterating the concern that U.S.-supplied “hardware could ultimately be discovered.” This led Wimert to forcefully retrieve the weapons. “This equipment was subsequently returned to the Station,” a CIA report cryptically concluded. Wimert also recalled that he was forced to pistol-whip General Valenzuela into returning the \$50,000 supplied to pay the kidnappers.<sup>40</sup> To dispose of the guns, as Wimert would later admit, he and Hecksher “drove seventy miles west, to the resort town of Vina del Mar, and threw the weapons into the Pacific Ocean.”

In addition to destroying evidence, CIA Station officials received orders to lie in response to any allegations of involvement, even to other U.S. offi-

cials. If any “points of compromise” of the CIA’s secret role in the Schneider assassination surfaced in the press or through the Chilean government’s investigation, headquarters warned in an October 28 cable reflecting the anxiety in Washington, “absolute denial will be the order of the day even with Ambassador and other embassy colleagues.”<sup>41</sup> According to Broe and Phillips, the CIA’s “position will be stonewall all the way.”

The stonewall strategy succeeded for four years—until investigative reporter Seymour Hersh broke the story of Track II and CIA efforts to destabilize the Allende government on the front page of the *New York Times* in September 1974. The revelations created an immediate political scandal. As the U.S. Senate launched a major investigation into CIA covert action in Chile, both the White House and the CIA defined their damage-control positions. The White House would claim ignorance; the CIA would claim to be following orders. Both would argue that they had disassociated the United States from the Viaux group prior to the Schneider assassination and therefore Washington was blameless.

In an August 12, 1975 closed-door deposition, Secretary Kissinger presented his story that he had told the CIA to “stand down” on Project FUBELT, shutting off coup plotting on October 15, 1970—a week prior to the Schneider shooting. Moreover, he asserted, “we never received another report on the subject.” After October 15, he claimed, “Track II was dead as far as my office was concerned.”<sup>42</sup> Kissinger, according to the Church Committee report, also “testified that he was informed of no coup plan which began with the abduction of General Schneider.” Asked specifically by Senator Gary Hart to clarify whether he had prior knowledge of the kidnapping plot against General Schneider, Kissinger was emphatic in his disavowal: “I said I did not know.”<sup>43</sup>

But just nine weeks prior to his testimony before the Senate committee, in the privacy of the Oval Office, Kissinger acknowledged to President Ford that he had been briefed on the kidnapping plan and claimed that was the reason he turned off the Viaux plot. According to the SECRET/NODIS/XGDS memorandum of their conversation, the two were discussing Senator Church’s investigation of U.S.-sponsored assassination plots:

*President:* I am concerned at Church trying to sensationalize by focusing on the assassinations. From what I am told, we made some clumsy attempts. From what I see, if he pushes it, it could make Kennedy look bad. But at the same time, it is so clumsy it makes CIA look bad. [ . . . ]

*Kissinger:* I think if everything were known, Kennedy and Johnson did far more than Nixon did. . . . Not since I have been here has there been



anything even thought of. *There was the killing of the Chilean chief of staff, but we had dissociated from that group when we heard they were plotting to kidnap him.* [emphasis added]<sup>44</sup>

Contrary to his testimony that his office considered Track II “dead” and received no post-October 15 reports on coup-plotting activities, Kissinger’s office was kept informed of the flurry of events between October 18 and 22. The cables from CIA headquarters to the Station repeatedly referred to the need for information since “we must be prepared to advise higher echelons.” Indeed, on October 19, between 3:30 P.M. and 4:30 P.M., Karamessines went to the White House to update Kissinger’s deputy, General Haig, whose job was to rapidly pass such information to the national security adviser.<sup>45</sup> That morning the CIA deputy director had received a detailed intelligence report from the Santiago Station outlining General Valenzuela’s comprehensive plan—starting with the Schneider kidnapping scheduled for that very evening—for a coup. (See Doc 13) In secret testimony before the Church Committee, Karamessines noted that he would have shared this information with Kissinger “very promptly, if for no other reason than that we didn’t have all that much promising news to report to the White House.” Haig apparently asked to be quickly informed of any developments. In a cable to Santiago that night, the CIA’s Chile Task Force requested that the Station provide a status report on “whatever events may have occurred night 19 October,” and whether “ref action was aborted, postponed, or whatever.” The cable noted that “Station will understand that HQS must respond during morning 20 Oct. to queries from higher levels”—the traditional reference to Kissinger’s office.

At 4:00 P.M. on October 22, eight hours after General Schneider was shot, Karamessines’s calendar shows he met again with Haig at the White House. No records of this meeting and the briefing Haig likely gave to Kissinger have been declassified. But the meeting was clearly to discuss the Schneider shooting and its impact on coup plotting.

The argument that Kissinger presented to protect the White House cast the CIA as a veritable rogue elephant, operating without authorization as the Nixon-ordered Project FUBELT culminated in a flurry of coup plotting and criminality during the week of October 15–22. The CIA, citing meetings with, and instructions from, both the president and his national security adviser, understood its clandestine operations to have the full backing of the White House. The fact remained, however, that Washington had been covertly involved in a shocking act of political assassination abroad—the Chilean equivalent of John F. Kennedy’s assassination.

To distance itself from any culpability for this crime of state, the Agency drafted a series of nuanced, self-serving, postmortems about the Schneider killing. A secret overview titled “The Assassination of General René Schneider” and written as the Senate investigation into Track II began, claimed that the murder was “totally unplanned and unforeseen.” Unplanned perhaps but certainly not unforeseen, the declassified records demonstrate. On two occasions the CIA’s coup conspirators raised the possibility that Schneider might be killed. During a conversation between Hecksher and a high-ranking official in the Carabineros on October 8, according to the memorandum of conversation, they analyzed “available means to remove” General Schneider. “Abduction attempt might lead to bloodshed,” they concluded, and as the military official presciently predicted, “Schneider’s accidental death would rally army firmly behind flag of constitutionalism.” In a meeting with a false-flag officer on October 16, a representative of Viaux’s group asked for “sponsor’s opinion about plan [to] import five Puerto Ricans to carry out kidnapping of Schneider.” He “explained Viaux group did not like killing and that kidnapping might result in violence.”

In a secret October 1974 briefing paper, titled “Special Mandate from the President on Chile,” the CIA attempted to rewrite FUBELT history, forcefully asserted that “the Viaux group, acting independently” had killed Schneider. “To sum up, the tragic death of General Schneider resulted from a unilateral kidnap attempt taken on the initiative of the Viaux group despite and against the advice of an Agency representative.” This argument ignored the fact, well-documented in the CIA’s own records, that Viaux was not acting independently or unilaterally, but clearly as a co-conspirator with Valenzuela who had the unreserved support of the CIA—support that included \$50,000 to pay the kidnap team Viaux had hired.<sup>46</sup> CIA documents written at the time of the shooting repeatedly referred to the assault as part of the “Valenzuela’s group coup plan.”

Viaux had accepted the CIA’s advice to “join forces with other coup planners so that they may act in concert.” The final coup plot called for Viaux to handle the abduction, using a small group of extreme right-wing civilians so that the crime could not be traced to the Chilean armed forces; in the aftermath of the kidnapping, Valenzuela, Admiral Tirado, and the active-duty military officers were supposed to take over the government. The initial kidnap attempt on October 19, Chilean court records show, had been Valenzuela’s idea and a collaborative effort—Valenzuela would make sure the guests stayed inside when Schneider left, and Viaux’s henchmen would pursue Schneider when he departed. A Chilean jury determined that the same group that attempted the kidnapping on October 19—part of the plan that



Valenzuela had described in detail to Colonel Wimert to be paid for by \$50,000 in CIA funds—had shot Schneider on October 22. Both Viaux and Valenzuela were subsequently convicted of conspiracy to cause a coup.

To absolve itself from accountability for what has come to be one of the most famous acts of political assassination in the history of U.S. covert operations, the CIA diligently fostered the impression before the Church Committee that all contact with Viaux's forces had ceased after October 18, when the Agency attempted to "de-fuse" his plotting—four days *before* the shooting. But key documents withheld from Senate investigators reveal multiple CIA contacts with Viaux's group *after* the shooting, as well as covert efforts to abet a conspiracy to obstruct justice and hide the U.S. role in this crime.

More than twenty-five years after the Senate select committee published its report on *Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, the CIA was forced to declassify a cable that showed that a "Viaux rep" had contacted the CIA in Santiago on October 24 with requests "that the group wants to see fulfilled 'based on your promises.'" Among them: "financial aid in resettling those of the group who have been identified with the conspiracy and who will have to leave Chile." Based on the concern that Viaux might "inculcate" Washington, the Agency had an incentive to help. In early November, according to a declassified November 9 cable from the Station, the CIA received intelligence that Viaux had "deposited detailed record of his activities . . . in safe custody abroad," and advised that "all bets are off if [Viaux] has to fight for his life." In a subsequent meeting at Langley headquarters, CIA false flagger Bruce MacMaster noted that several members of the Viaux gang were in prison and "there is a serious concern that one of these people now jailed in Chile will possibly implicate CIA in the action taken against Schneider." In a still classified memorandum of the conversation, MacMaster stated that he had recently met with a member of Viaux's group who was "seeking a large amount of money—somewhere in the neighborhood of \$250,000 for the purpose of providing support for the families of the members of the group." According to MacMaster, the CIA "could probably get away with paying around \$10,000 for the support of each family." (Doc 16)

The CIA did, in fact, pay "hush" money to those directly responsible for the Schneider assassination—and then covered up that secret payment up for thirty years. In a short paragraph, buried in a September 2000 report to Congress on *CIA Activities in Chile*, the Agency conceded that

In November 1970 a member of the Viaux group who avoided capture recontacted the Agency and requested financial assistance on behalf of the group. Although the agency had no obligation to the group because it acted on its own, in an effort to keep previous contact secret, maintain

the good will of the group and for humanitarian reasons, \$35,000 was passed.”<sup>47</sup>



At the time of the Schneider assassination, only a handful of high U.S. officials and CIA operatives knew that this atrocity was set in motion by an explicit presidential directive for covert action to undermine Chilean democracy. Unwitting of how and why General Schneider had come to be shot, the State Department recommended to Kissinger that President Nixon send a condolence message to Chile’s outgoing president Eduardo Frei. (Doc 17) “Dear Mr. President,” reads the text of the most ironic document to be generated by Project FUBELT:

The shocking attempt on the life of General Schneider is a stain on the pages of contemporary history. I would like you to know of my sorrow that this repugnant event has occurred in your country. . . .

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon



~~SECRET~~

MEETING WITH PRESIDENT  
ON CHILE AT 1525 SEPT 15, 70  
PRESENT: JOHN MITCHELL & HENRY KISSINGER

1 in 10 chance perhaps, but save Chile!  
with spending

not engaged with involvement

no involvement of embassy

\$10,000,000 available, more if necessary

full-time job - but now we have

same plan

make the enemy screen

48 hours for plan of action

White House, 15, 70

including

MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT  
ON CHILE

SEP 15, 1970 - PRESENT WERE: JOHN MITCHELL AND HENRY KISSINGER

~~SECRET~~

17 September 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Genesis of Project FUBELT

1. On this date the Director called a meeting in connection with the Chilean situation. Present in addition to the Director were General Cushman, DDCI; Col. White, ExDir-Compt; Thomas Karamessines, DDP; Cord Meyer, ADDP; William V. Broe, Chief WH Division; [REDACTED] Deputy Chief, WH Division, [REDACTED] Chief, Covert Action, WH Division; [REDACTED] Chief, WH/4.

2. The Director told the group that President Nixon had decided that an Allende regime in Chile was not acceptable to the United States.. The President asked the Agency to prevent Allende from coming to power or to unseat him. The President authorized ten million dollars for this purpose, if needed. Further, The Agency is to carry out this mission without coordination with the Departments of State or Defense.

3. During the meeting it was decided that Mr. Thomas Karamessines, DDP, would have overall responsibility for this project. He would be assisted by a special task force set up for this purpose in the Western Hemisphere Division. The Chief of the task force would be Mr. David Phillips, [REDACTED]

4. Col. White was asked by the Director to make all necessary support arrangements in connection with the project.

5. The Director said he had been asked by Dr. Henry Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, to meet with him on Friday, 18 September to give him the Agency's views on how this mission could be accomplished.

(Signed) William V. Broe

William V. Broe  
Chief

Western Hemisphere Division

Declassified  
Photocopy from Gerald R. Ford Library





SECRET

(79)

Approved for Release  
July 2000

[REDACTED] Situation Report # 1

The following actions have been taken as of 0830 hours 17 September 1970:

A. Organizationally:

(1) Two special operational units will be in being in Hqs by close of business 17 September. (These are as shown in the attached chart.) Both units will operate under the cover of the [REDACTED] 40 Committee approval of 14 September for political action and the probing for military possibilities to thwart Allende.

(2) [REDACTED] are being recalled and should be in Washington by morning 18 September: David Phillips [REDACTED] to be Chief and Deputy Chief of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] should also be at Hqs. the same morning thus enabling us to devote the weekend to preparation of the initial operational plan.

(3) We are assigning [REDACTED] as Executive Officer to the [REDACTED] unit. [REDACTED] has had extensive experience in crash endeavors of this sort and recently headed [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

(4) We plan to supplement this group with [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who will conduct special recruitment and other direct approaches - they all have "false flag" experience. Other officers who will be assigned to the [REDACTED] unit are: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] will concentrate on [REDACTED] matters.

(5) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(6) [REDACTED] will arrive in

Santiago on mid-day, [REDACTED] to augment the Station strength.

We have also acted on the Ambassador's request for a [REDACTED]

offering him [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] have [REDACTED] experience, long exposure to [REDACTED]

are quick and top-notch officers.

[REDACTED]

2

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~~SECRET~~

(7) Space for a minimum of [REDACTED] people in the [REDACTED] unit has been prepared contiguous to the WH front office. The original [REDACTED] group has also been augmented by adding [REDACTED] on military matters, who will remain at present quarters on the [REDACTED]. This unit will continue full time to provide support to the 40-Committee program.

(8) Our search for Staff Officer contacts out of the past which may be of use now continues. We initially intend to send [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3

~~SECRET~~

B. Substantive Proposals now being considered or prepared

(1) Begin immediately to determine just what economic pressure tactics can be employed. [REDACTED]

(2) [REDACTED]

(3) Determine what direct steps could be taken by the U.S. business firms represented in Chile to apply economic pressure. [REDACTED]

(4) COS will take immediate steps to arrange for head of [REDACTED] for purpose of getting up-dated read<sup>ing</sup>/from [REDACTED]

(5) Prepare a scenario for use by [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] setting forth a possible role by the [REDACTED] which could bring pressure on Chile for the purpose of strengthening the resolve of the Chilean military to act against Allende.

(6) Consider the possibility of a temporary outpost in [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] should we decide to go this route [REDACTED]

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~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED] and other advantages.)

(7) As a continuing responsibility, keep [REDACTED] and his [REDACTED] business friends on board to extent required and acquire and use [REDACTED] knowledge as appropriate. Debrief [REDACTED] fully as soon as possible to see if he can lead us to economic weak points in particular.

(8) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

(9) [REDACTED] to ask [REDACTED] (on the quiet) to begin to provide [REDACTED] (We should consider sending a [REDACTED] team to Santiago [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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SECRET

C. Specific possibilities for future study

1. [REDACTED]

(a) Review list of contacts in [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] for possible use in propaganda and  
for action programs inside or outside of Chile.

(b) Review list of past, existing, or possible contacts

in [REDACTED] in Chile to determine possibility for propaganda  
or action use.

2. Stimulate unrest and other occurrences to force military action:

(a) Approach [REDACTED] to make statement in

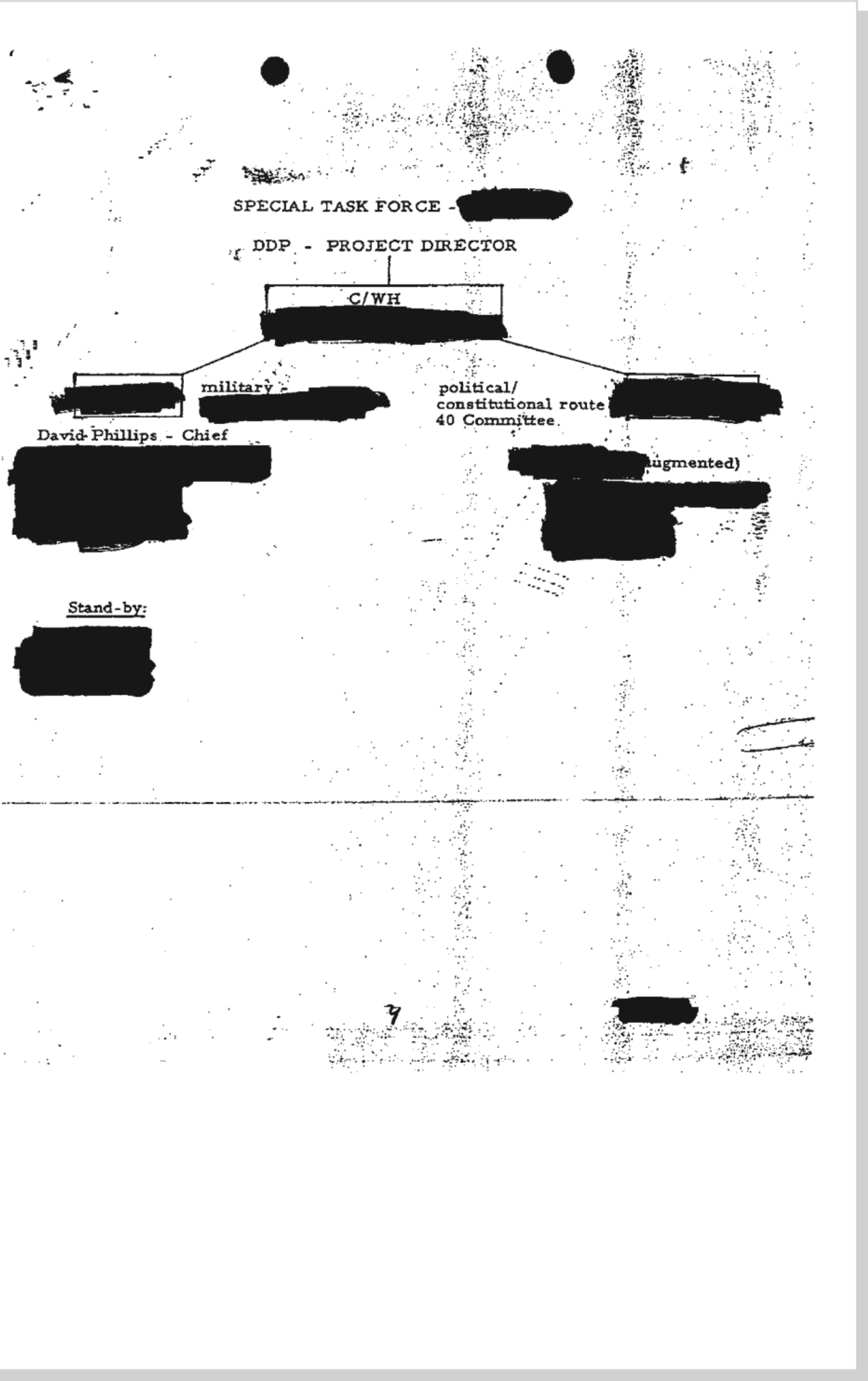
favor of Alessandri, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

(b) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

(c) Determine whether General Viaux [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] induced to take action which would cause Communist reaction  
and in turn force military hand.





UNCLASSIFIED

9 September 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Meeting of the 40 Committee, 8 September 1970

PRESENT: Mr. Kissinger, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Packard, Mr. Johnson,  
Admiral Moorer, and Mr. Helms

Mr. Charles A. Meyer, Mr. Viron P. Vaky, Mr. William McAfee,  
Mr. Thomas Karamessines, and Mr. William Broe were also  
present.

Chile

a. The Chairman opened the meeting with a reference to Ambassador Korry's excellent cable of 7 September 1970 and asked for an analysis of where prospects now stand for taking any kind of action which might successfully preclude Allende assuming the presidency of Chile following his garnering of a plurality of the popular vote in the elections on 4 September.

b. Mr. Broe summarized the situation and highlighted some of the points in Ambassador Korry's cable. He noted that Korry is attempting to maintain flexibility and that there is some, but not much, fluidity in the situation. He pointed out that Frei is an essential cog to success in any action, congressional or military, to frustrate an Allende take-over and that Ambassador Korry is very pessimistic about the prospects of Frei doing much more than deploring Allende's electoral victory. He concluded that it is still too early to decide on a given course of action and suggested that the Embassy and CIA field elements be requested during the next week to probe all possible aspects of feasible actions and forward recommendations as to what might be done.

c. In the lively discussion which followed, there was general agreement that more time to assess the situation was essential. It was also agreed that there is now little likelihood of success in the previously proposed operation to influence the 24 October congressional run-off election against Allende.

d. Mr. Helms, noting that congressional action against Allende was not likely to succeed, offered his personal observation that once Allende is in office it is predictable that the Chilean opposition to him will disintegrate and collapse rapidly. He expressed the view that Allende will quickly neutralize the military and police after which there will be no effective rallying point for opposition against him. Without advocating it as a course of action, he observed that a military golpe

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against Allende would have little chance of success unless undertaken soon. He stated that even then there is no positive assurance of success because of the apolitical history of the military in Chile and the presence of Allende supporters in various military elements.

e. Mr. Packard was also strongly of the view that any effective military action to prevent Allende from assuming the presidency would have to occur in the very near future. He expressed the hope that the Chilean military leaders would undertake such action soon on their own initiative.

f. Messrs. Johnson and Meyer pointed out that if Allende's election is frustrated by a military take-over, there is a strong likelihood that his supporters would take to the streets and plunge the country into full-scale civil war. They felt that Allende was possibly the lesser of two evils. They suggested that Frei should be strongly counseled to start immediately building an effective political opposition for the future before important individuals who would constitute that opposition might decide to leave the country.

g. The Chairman and Mr. Mitchell expressed considerable skepticism that once Allende is in the presidency there will be anyone capable of organizing any real counterforce against him.

h. In accord with the agreement of those present, the Chairman directed that the Embassy be immediately requested for a cold-blooded assessment of:

- (1) the pros and cons and problems and prospects involved should a Chilean military coup be organized now with U.S. assistance, and
- (2) the pros and cons and problems and prospects involved in organizing an effective future Chilean opposition to Allende.

i. The Chairman stated that these assessments and recommendations should be available in time for 40 Committee consideration in a meeting to be convened on 14 September.

*Frank M. Chapin*  
Frank M. Chapin

Distribution

Mr. Mitchell  
Mr. Packard  
Mr. Johnson  
Admiral Moorer  
Mr. Helms

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**SECRET**

9-12-70

Chile Project (#S199900030)

12 SEPTEMBER 1970

U.S. Department of State

Release \_\_\_\_\_ Excise ☒ Deny \_\_\_\_\_

Declassify: In Part ☒ In Full \_\_\_\_\_

Exemption(s) B-1

(MA025)

P.C.  
B1

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR ANALYSIS  
OF MILITARY OPTION IN PRESENT CHILEAN SITUATION

IAW

1. WE BELIEVE IT NOW CLEAR THAT CHILEAN MILITARY WILL NOT REPEAT NOT MOVE TO PREVENT ALLENDE'S ACCESSION, BARRING UNLIKELY SITUATION OF NATIONAL CHAOS AND WIDE-SPREAD VIOLENCE. ALL INFO AVAILABLE TO US INDICATES THAT ARMED FORCES' CHIEFS ARE UNPREPARED GO BEYOND SEEKING MINIMAL "GUARANTEES" FROM ALLENDE WHICH IN THEIR VIEW WOULD PROTECT EXISTING RANK STRUCTURE AND PREVENT POLITICIZING OF MILITARY. (WE REGARD SUCH GUARANTEES AS VIRTUALLY WORTHLESS OVER THE LONG HAUL.)

2. OUR OWN MILITARY PEOPLE HAVE HAD FAIRLY EXTENSIVE CONTACTS WITH THEIR CHILEAN COLLEAGUES DURING LAST FEW DAYS. THEY ARE UNANIMOUS IN REJECTING POSSIBILITY OF MEANINGFUL MILITARY INTERVENTION IN POLITICAL SITUATION PRIOR TO OCTOBER 24 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION OF PRESIDENT. THERE IS APPARENTLY SOME TALK AMONG SOME OFFICERS OF DOING SOMETHING AFTER THAT DATE IF ALLENDE IS ELECTED. IN OUR JUDGEMENT SUCH MUTTERINGS ARE NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY.

3. YOU WILL HAVE SEEN FROM OUR RECENT REPORTING THAT THE ALESSANDRI-TO NEW ELECTIONS-TO FREI FORMULA HAS ACQUIRED NEW LIFE. WE CANNOT YET BE OPTIMISTIC; WE BELIEVE THAT THE SCHEME MIGHT JUST POSSIBLY WORK IF INTENSE PRESSURES ON PDC BUILD UP (DISINTEGRATING ECONOMIC SITUATION, SPREADING FEAR AROUSED BY PREMATURE COMMUNIST MOVES, ETC.) AND IF FREI SUCCEEDS IN WHAT IS BEGINNING TO LOOK LIKE AN ALL-OUT EFFORT.

- F-100

4. MILITARY IN THEIR CURRENT AND CUSTOMARY STATE OF FLABBY IRRESOLUTION HAVE NO PART TO PLAY IN THIS SCENARIO UNTIL THE FINAL ACT. WHATEVER THE OUTCOME OF ANY DISCUSSIONS WITH ALLENDE WHICH MAY TAKE PLACE, WE FORESEE NO SIGNIFICANT, SUSTAINED PRESSURE FROM THAT

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QUARTER ON FREI AND PDC. WE HAVE TO ACCEPT FACT THAT THIS MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT SIMPLY LACKS COHESION AND POLITICAL PURPOSE; ITS ONLY REAL UNIFYING INSTINCT IS TO SURVIVE SO AS TO ENJOY MINOR PRIVILEGES (CARS, HOUSES, PENSIONS AND THE LIKE) AND DAZZLE-PARADE-GROUND-AUDIENCES. FEARS IN THE ARMED FORCES OF WHAT A MARXIST REGIME WILL MEAN FOR THE INSTITUTION--AND THEY DO EXIST--CAN ALL TOO EASILY BE TRANQUILIZED BY ALLENDE APPEALS TO THESE PETTY SELF-INTERESTS, ACCOMPANIED BY THE HOLLOW GUARANTEES TO WHICH WE HAVE REFERRED. IN ALL FAIRNESS, WE MUST ADD THAT MILITARY ARE ALSO AFFLICTED BY NIGHTMARE OF CONFRONTATION IN THE STREETS WITH "POPULAR FORCES" AND ARE UNWILLING OR UNABLE TO CONSIDER HOW THEY MIGHT PRE-EMPT OR CONTAIN SUCH FORCES. UNLESS BACKED BY UNAMBIGUOUS CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL AUTHORITY, THEY WOULD SHRINK FROM PROSPECT OF HAVING TO SHOOT CIVILIANS AND OTHERS PROVOKING WHAT THEY SEE AS POSSIBLE CIVIL WAR. ARMED FORCES ARE SO DISORGANIZED AND INEXPERIENCED IN THERE MATTERS AS TO MAKE IMPOSSIBLE THE KIND OF QUICK BLOODLESS MILITARY INTERVENTION (INCLUDING PRIOR ROUNDUP OF LEFTIST LEADERS) WE ARE FAMILIAR WITH IN OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES.

Not of  
"positive"  
trial  
Fears

5. AS STATED, HOWEVER, MILITARY WOULD HAVE A VITAL PART TO PLAY ON OCTOBER 24-25 IF SCENARIO WERE TO UNFOLD FAVORABLY. TROOPS IN THE BACKGROUND PREPARED TO MAINTAIN ORDER IN SANTIAGO, AND TO ENSURE THAT THE CONSTITUTIONAL WILL OF THE CONGRESS PREVAILED, WOULD BE NECESSARY. IT IS OUR JUDGEMENT THAT FREI AGAIN IS THE KEY TO THIS PROBLEM. THE COMMANDERS CAN BE EXPECTED TO OBEY HIS ORDERS, AND WE THINK IT LIKELY THAT THE TROOPS, DESPITE SOME MARXIST PENETRATION, WILL OBEY THEIRS. IT SEEMS TO US, THEN, THAT THE SUCCESS OF SUCH AN ENTERPRISE IN ALL ITS ASPECTS MUST DEPEND ON THE PRESIDENT'S WILL AND SKILLS--PERSONAL QUALITIES ON WHICH EXPERIENCE COUNSELS WE CANNOT PIN MORE THAN MODEST HOPES.

Frei

Frei

6. WHAT WE ARE SAYING IN THIS "COLD-BLOODED ASSESSMENT" IS THAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER SIGNIFICANT USG ACTION WITH THE CHILEAN MILITARY ARE NONEXISTENT. THEY ALREADY KNOW THEY HAVE OUR BLESSING FOR ANY SERIOUS MOVE AGAINST ALLENDE, AND WE CAN MANAGE TO REPEAT THE MESSAGE IF CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD SO DICTATE. BUT THIS IS AS FAR AS WE CAN PRUDENTLY OR REASONABLY GO.

Quarantine

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DOCUMENT 6. CIA, **SECRET** Cable from Headquarters [Initial Orders to Explore a Military Golpe], September 9, 1970 (page 1).

MESSAGE FORM TOTAL COPIES: 9		ROUTING AND/OR INITIALS - SECRETARY	
<b>SECRET</b>		2	5
		3	6
		4	7
			8

G: [REDACTED]  
T: Deputy Chief, WHD  
D: 9 September 1970

FILE SECRETARIAT DISSEMINATION ☐ INDEX ☐ NO INDEX ☐ RETURN TO [REDACTED] BRANCH [REDACTED]

(classification) [REDACTED] (date and time filed) 09 [REDACTED] Sep 70 (cite) [REDACTED] (pica) [REDACTED]

CITE DIRECTOR [REDACTED]

PRIORITY SANTIAGO

Declassified and  
Approved for Release  
July 2000

1. IT IS REASONABLY CLEAR, IN EXPLORING AVENUES TO PREVENT AN ALLENDE GOVERNMENT FROM EXERCISING POWER, THAT (A) THE POLITICAL/CONSTITUTIONAL ROUTE IN ANY FORM IS A NON-STARTER AND (B) THE ONLY PROSPECT WITH ANY CHANCE OF SUCCESS WHATSOEVER IS A MILITARY GOLPE EITHER BEFORE OR IMMEDIATELY AFTER ALLENDE'S ASSUMPTION OF POWER. THIS CABLE IS ADDRESSED TO THE OPERATIONAL TASK OF ESTABLISHING THOSE DIRECT CONTACTS WITH THE CHILEAN MILITARY WHICH ARE REQUIRED TO EVALUATE POSSIBILITIES AND, AT LEAST EQUALLY IMPORTANT, COULD BE USED TO STIMULATE A GOLPE IF AND WHEN A DECISION WERE MADE TO DO SO.

(Continued.....)

COORDINATING OFFICERS [REDACTED]  
RELEASING OFFICER [REDACTED]  
**SECRET**  
AUTHENTIC OFFICE [REDACTED]

REPRODUCTION BY OTHER THAN THE ISSUING OFFICE IS PROHIBITED



PAGE 1 OF 7

2. DO NOT EXCEED 69 TYPEWRITTEN CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.

ORIG: [REDACTED]  
UNIT: WH Division [REDACTED]  
EXT: [REDACTED]  
DATE: 27 September 1970

CLASSIFIED MESSAGE

Copy of [REDACTED] SEP 70

153

SECRET

SECRET  
(CLASSIFICATION) (DATE AND TIME FILED)

TO IMMEDIATE SANTIAGO [REDACTED]

I. PHILOSOPHY

WE ACCEPT AS AXIOM THAT FREI MUST EITHER MANAGE THE COUP ACTIVELY, OR GO, IF IT IS TO SUCCEED. WE ACCEPT AS HYPOTHESIS THAT FREI PROBABLY WILL NOT MOVE. WE POSTULATE THAT FREI'S ABILITY TO MOVE AND TO A LESSER EXTENT HIS WILLINGNESS, IS INTERRELATED TO THE CREATION OF A CLIMATE IN WHICH SUCH A MOVE CAN TAKE PLACE SUCCESSFULLY. WE CONCLUDE THAT IT IS OUR TASK TO CREATE SUCH A CLIMATE CLIMAXING WITH A SOLID PRETEXT THAT WILL FORCE THE MILITARY AND THE PRESIDENT TO TAKE SOME ACTION IN THE DESIRED DIRECTION.

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July 2000

CONTINUED ...

COORDINATING OFFICERS [REDACTED]

RELEASING OFFICER [REDACTED]

SECRET

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER [REDACTED]

129

FORM 3705

1. [REDACTED]  
 2. DO NOT EXCEED 69 TYPEWRITTEN CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.

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PAGE TWO

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TO

## II. SITUATION

AS OF THIS DATE A NUMBER OF ACTIONS HAVE BEEN PLACED IN TRAIN TO SENSITIZE THE EXTERNAL WORLD TO THE THREAT ALLENDE POSES. THIS IS A NECESSARY FIRST STEP TOWARD MOVING TO MORE VITAL PRESSURE POINTS SUCH AS THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE FAILURE OF THE POLITICAL SOLUTION AND THE NEED FOR THE MILITARY ONE. THIS EFFORT IS IN ITS FIRST STAGES. WE WERE MOST PLEASED TO NOTE THE PROGRAM FOR [REDACTED] WHICH IS A CONCRETE MOVE TOWARD MOBILIZING INTERNAL RESISTANCE TO ALLENDE. WE BELIEVE THAT THE EXTERNAL EFFORT, WHICH IS BY NATURE COMPLEMENTARY, IS USELESS UNLESS WE CAN SPARK INTERNAL RESISTANCE.

## III. TASKS

IT THEREFORE FOLLOWS THAT WE SHOULD DIRECT OUR ATTENTION IN A SYSTEMATIC FASHION TO THE THREE MAIN AND INTERLINKED THRUSTS OF A PROGRAM DESIGNED TO: A) FORCE FREI TO ACT OR GO; B) CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH HE OR OTHERS CAN ACT SUCCESSFULLY;

CONTINUED

COORDINATING OFFICERS

RELEASING OFFICER

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AUTHENTICATING OFFICER



1. [REDACTED]  
2. DO NOT EXCEED 69 TYPEWRITTEN CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.

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PAGE THREE

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TO

C) ASSIST IN CREATING THE PRETEXT OR FLASH POINT FOR ACTION.

IV. CREATION OF COUP CLIMATE

A) ECONOMIC WARFARE

MOST OF THE WORK HERE MUST BE DONE BY CHILEAN AND

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THE AMBASSADOR, WELL  
WITHIN HIS [REDACTED] GUIDELINES, CAN BE OF POWERFUL ASSISTANCE  
IN THIS EFFORT. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

B) POLITICAL WARFARE

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT ALLENDE RECEIVE THE SMALLEST  
NUMBER OF VOTES AT THE 24 OCTOBER SESSION OF CONGRESS AND  
THAT LONG BEFORE THEN IT APPEARS THAT HE HAS MINIMUM POLI-  
TICAL SUPPORT. [REDACTED]

COORDINATING OFFICERS

CONTINUED

RELEASING OFFICER

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AUTHENTICATING OFFICER

2. DO NOT EXCEED 69 TYPEWRITTEN CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.

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PAGE FOUR

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TO

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] THAT AS MANY PDC  
DEPUTIES AS POSSIBLE BE [REDACTED], OR PERSUADED TO  
STAY LOYAL TO FREI; [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] AND THAT IN EVERY FASHION EVERY SPECIAL INTEREST  
GROUP THAT WE CAN CONTACT BE FINANCED AND ASSISTED IN MAKING  
PUBLIC STATEMENTS, PUBLIC RALLIES, TRAVELLING TO PROPAGANDIZE  
OR IN ANY OTHER IMAGINATIVE WAY THE STATION CAN CONJURE ASSURE  
THAT ALLENDE DOES NOT ENLARGE HIS BASE OF SUPPORT BETWEEN NOW  
AND 24 OCTOBER. EXHAUST EVERY POSSIBLE MEANS FOR DOING THIS  
AND ENGAGE IN ANY OPERATION THAT YOU THINK WILL ACCOMPLISH  
THIS PURPOSE NO MATTER HOW LARGE OR SMALL.

C) PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

HERE WE MUST PAUSE FOR A MOMENT TO TAKE STOCK. AS  
SHORT AS TEN DAYS AGO THERE SEEMED TO BE ALMOST NO FEELING  
OUTSIDE OF CHILE AND VERY LITTLE MASS FEELING WITHIN CHILE  
THAT THE ELECTION OF ALLENDE WAS NECESSARILY AN EVIL. THUS,

CONTINUED . . .

COORDINATING OFFICERS

RELEASING OFFICER

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AUTHENTICATING OFFICER



2. DO NOT EXCEED 69 TYPEWRITTEN CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.

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PAGE FIVE

(CLASSIFICATION)

(DATE AND TIME FILED)

TO IT MAY BE DIFFICULT TO INSTANTLY MOVE INTO A HARD LINE ABOUT A MILITARY COUP. WE MUST BEGIN TO GRADUALLY CREATE A CLIMATE IN WHICH THIS CONCLUSION BECOMES INEVITABLE. THUS WE FORESEE A FOUR-STAGE CAMPAIGN: (1) SENSITIZE FEELING WITHIN AND WITHOUT CHILE THAT ELECTION OF ALLENDE IS A NEFARIOUS DEVELOPMENT FOR CHILE, LATIN AMERICA, AND THE WORLD. WE ARE WELL ALONG ON THIS OBJECTIVE OUTSIDE CHILE BUT ARE STILL IN DOUBT AS TO THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TEMPERATURE ON THIS POINT WITHIN CHILE. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT MASS PUBLIC FEELING AS OPPOSED TO THE PRIVATE FEELINGS OF FREI, THE PN AND OTHER ELITE; (2) CREATE THE CONVICTION THAT ALLENDE MUST BE STOPPED; WE ARE WORKING ON THAT PREMISE FOR THE BALANCE OF THIS WEEK TOGETHER WITH POINT 3; (3) DISCREDIT PARLIAMENTARY SOLUTION AS UNWORKABLE. WE FORESEE A MASSIVE EFFORT IN THIS DIRECTION DURING THE WEEK OF 5 OCTOBER; (4) SURFACE INELUCTABLE CONCLUSION THAT MILITARY COUP IS THE ONLY ANSWER. THIS TO CARRY FORWARD UNTIL IT TAKES PLACE. TIME IS SHORT AND WE MUST TELESCOPE SOME OF THE PHASES

CONTINUED . . .

COORDINATING OFFICERS

RELEASING OFFICER

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AUTHENTICATING OFFICER

1. [REDACTED]  
 2. DO NOT EXCEED 69 TYPEWRITTEN CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.

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PAGE SIX

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TO NOTED ABOVE. HOWEVER, WE MUST HOLD FIRMLY TO THE OUTLINES OR OUR PRODUCTION WILL BE DIFFUSE, DENATURED, AND INEFFECTIVE NOT LEAVING THE INDELIBLE RESIDUE IN THE MIND THAT AN ACCUMULATION OF ARSENIC DOES. THE KEY IS PSYCH WAR WITHIN CHILE. WE CANNOT ENDEAVOR TO IGNITE THE WORLD IF CHILE ITSELF IS A PLACID LAKE. THE FUEL FOR THE FIRE MUST COME FROM WITHIN CHILE.. THEREFORE, THE STATION SHOULD EMPLOY EVERY STRATEGEM, EVERY PLOY, HOWEVER BIZARRE, TO CREATE THIS INTERNAL RESISTANCE. [REDACTED] PROP SHOULD BECOME SHARPER AND MORE PROVOCATIVE, FUNDS SHOULD BE EXPENDED LIBERALLY TO STIFFEN, ORGANIZE, AND HEARTENED RESISTANCE FROM EVERY INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP THAT IS WILLING TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] PUBLIC AND PROVOCATIVE RALLIES SHOULD BE HELD, GROWING IN SIZE AND INTENSITY UNTIL THE COMMUNISTS MUST REACT. [REDACTED]

COORDINATING OFFICERS

CONTINUED

RELEASING OFFICER

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AUTHENTICATING OFFICER



1. [REDACTED]  
 2. DO NOT EXCEED 69 TYPEWRITTEN CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.

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TO [REDACTED]

#### V. PRETEXT

IF WE ARE SUCCESSFUL IN HEIGHTENING TENSION THROUGH THE THREE MAIN LINES NOTED ABOVE THE PRETEXT WILL, IN ALL PROBABILITY, PRESENT ITSELF. THE ONE ACT THAT WILL FORCE MASSIVE COMMUNIST REACTION AND/OR PUBLIC OUTRAGE. WE CAN BE LOOKING FOR THE OPPORTUNITY AND WHEN THE TIME COMES SPARK IT.

#### VI. PRESSURE ON FREI

ALL [REDACTED] RESOURCES IN TERMS OF HUMAN CONTACT, PROPAGANDA, OR DENIGRATION WILL BE USED TO PERSUADE FREI TO MOVE. YOUR INTERNAL ACTIONS SHOULD BE AIMED AT THE SAME OBJECTIVE.

#### VII. MILITARY

EVENTUALLY WE MAY USE [REDACTED]

COORDINATING OFFICERS

CONTINUED

RELEASING OFFICER

~~SECRET~~

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER

SECRET [REDACTED]

10 October 1970

Track II

[REDACTED]

1. Station "false flag" officer contacted General Viaux who claimed that he had suspended his coup planned for this weekend until he talked with our officer. Viaux requested that we make an airdrop to establish our bona fides.

2. [REDACTED]

3. [REDACTED] told the Chief of Station that he believes there is no chance of military intervention directed by the Army High Command.

4. COS met with [REDACTED] who said that he had talked with General Viaux, and as a consequence is convinced that Viaux has no military support.

5. General Viaux intends to increase the level of terrorism in Santiago over the weekend. The objective of this activity is to provoke the UP into retaliatory violence and public disorders.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

The COS and [REDACTED] have passed the word to the highest levels of the Chilean military that the USG is willing to support any military move to deny Allende the Presidency. Yesterday the COS held exploratory conversations with [REDACTED] who was very pessimistic about the possibility for military intervention, and a false flag staffer met with General Viaux who requested an air drop of weapons to help him launch a coup.

SITUATION:

Although the Military High Command is aware of our desire and willingness to help block Allende, they remain reluctant to act. At the present time only one military leader of national stature, General Viaux, appears committed to denying Allende the Presidency by force, and it is not clear how much support this retired General will be able to muster for a coup attempt.

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PAGE 1 OF 2

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David A. Phillips  
WHD  
E: 7 Oct 70

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TO IMMEDIATE SANTIAGO \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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July 2000

1. \_\_\_\_\_ INSTRUCTS YOU TO CONTACT THE MILITARY AND  
LET THEM KNOW USG WANTS A MILITARY SOLUTION, AND THAT WE  
WILL SUPPORT THEM NOW AND LATER.

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ REQUIRES THAT YOU USE ALL AVAILABLE ASSETS  
AND STRATAGEMS INCLUDING THE RUMOR-MILL TO CREATE AT LEAST  
SOME SORT OF COUP CLIMATE. IF MAJOR REACTION BY THE LEFT  
CANNOT BE PROVOKED, THIS EFFORT TO BE TOPPED \_\_\_\_\_

COORDINATING OFFICERS

CONTINUED...

RELEASING OFFICER \_\_\_\_\_

SECRET

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER \_\_\_\_\_

DO NOT EXCEED 69 TYPEWRITTEN CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.

TO:  
ATTN:  
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DATE:

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TO WHICH CAN BE USED BY MILITARY AS PRETEXT.

4. [REDACTED] ARE YOUR INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACTION BETWEEN NOW AND 24 OCTOBER. ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS ARE SECONDARY, AND YOU SHOULD NOT LET ANY OTHER ACTIVITY BY YOU AND YOUR [REDACTED] OFFICERS VIOLATE THIS THREE-PRONGED TASK. EVERY HOUR COUNTS. DO NOT CONCERN YOURSELF NOW WITH PDC, FREI, VITAL CENTER, AND PN.

5. YOUR EFFORTS TO PREPARE FOR FUTURE WHILE NECESSARY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED SECOND PRIORITY (WE ARE APPROVING YOUR SPONSORSHIP OF DIVISIVE TACTICS IN UP BY [REDACTED] IN SEPARATE MESSAGE).

6. IN SUM, WE WANT YOU TO SPONSOR A MILITARY MOVE WHICH CAN TAKE PLACE, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, IN A CLIMATE OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY. WORK TO THAT END WITH REFERENCES AS YOUR CHARTER.

END OF MESSAGE

COORDINATING OFFICERS

CONTINUED...

RELEASING OFFICER

~~SECRET~~

AUTHEN [REDACTED] ER



SECRET

KEEP ATTACHMENT

15 October 1970

313

SUBJECT: The Coup That Failed: The Effects on Allende and his Political Posture, With Special Emphasis on his Stance Before U.S. Positions, Moderate or Tough

Approved for Release  
July 2000

I. Probable Reaction to an Unsuccessful Viaux Coup.

A. Should General Roberto Viaux launch an unsuccessful military coup to deny Allende the Chilean presidency, the results could range from a quick snuffing out of his rebellious candle to a flaming civil war situation. But certain basic assumptions are valid without definition of the degree or circumstance of failure.

(1) Allende would be forced to proclaim U.S. sponsorship of the coup attempt. He would be under considerable international pressure from anti-American elements abroad to denounce the movement as American-inspired. Consequently, U.S. prestige in Chile, Latin America, and the free world would be diminished.

(2) The Communist power-base would increase significantly. They would have the excuse to move quickly into control of what they considered power points, especially press, radio and television.

(3) Allende would attempt to consolidate his position within the military, thereby decreasing the prospects for a post-inaugural coup.

(4) Allende would exploit this situation by pressuring the political opposition (PDC, PN) to support his nationalization program.

(5) Allende would call for an advance in any timetable of expropriation and would significantly increase his public attacks against the military and the U.S.

B. Even if Allende's long-range strategy is to achieve the aims of his program through a moderate approach, the combination

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of the above factors might force Allende to adopt a demagogic and nationalistic posture in the early days of his presidency.

## II. Allende's Probable Reaction to a Moderate U.S. Posture

A. Allende may find it difficult but not impossible to carry out a long-range program which could be bruited as reasonable and moderate.

B. Allende would find a moderate U.S. posture a fertile atmosphere for carrying out a nationalistic program with ties to the West, especially in keeping his copper in the dollar markets and resisting pressures to drastically reduce (or break) diplomatic relations with the U.S.

C. Allende might be able to take a more independent stance in resisting the Soviets and Cubans.

## III. Allende's Probable Reaction to a Tough U.S. Posture

A. Allende would find it extremely difficult to adopt a reasonable and moderate program for Chile. He would have a reduced capability to impede the rapid political expansion of Communists and leftists.

B. Allende's attempts to maintain dollar markets would not be significantly reduced by a tough U.S. stance. But internal pressure to greatly reduce diplomatic relations with the U.S. would be given added impetus.

C. The most probable effect of a tough U.S. position would be the acceleration of Allende's and Chile's move toward the Communist camp.

2

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15 October 1970

Document No. # 12

## MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION:

Dr. Kissinger, Mr. Karamessines, Gen. Haig  
at the White House - 15 October 1970

**1.3(a)(4)**

2. Then Mr. Karamessines provided a run-down on Viaux, the Canales meeting with Tirado, the latter's new position (after Porta was relieved of command "for health reasons") and, in some detail, the general situation in Chile from the coup possibility viewpoint.

3. A certain amount of information was available to us concerning Viaux's alleged support throughout the Chilean military. We had assessed Viaux's claims carefully, basing our analysis on good intelligence from a number of sources. Our conclusion was clear: Viaux did not have more than one chance in twenty - perhaps less - to launch a successful coup.

4. The unfortunate repercussions, in Chile and internationally, of an unsuccessful coup were discussed. Dr. Kissinger ticked off

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With PORTIONS EXEMPTED  
E.O. 12356, Sec. 1.3 (a) (7)

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NOV 1981

1.3(a)

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1.3(a)(4)

his list of these negative possibilities. His items were remarkably similar to the ones Mr. Karamessines had prepared.

5. It was decided by those present that the Agency must get a message to Viaux warning him against any precipitate action. In essence our message was to state: "We have reviewed your plans, and based on your information and ours, we come to the conclusion that your plans for a coup at this time cannot succeed. Failing, they may reduce your capabilities for the future. Preserve your assets. We will stay in touch. The time will come when you with all your other friends can do something. You will continue to have our support".

6. After the decision to de-fuse the Viaux coup plot, at least temporarily, Dr. Kissinger instructed Mr. Karamessines to preserve Agency assets in Chile, working clandestinely and securely to maintain the capability for Agency operations against Allende in the future.

7. Dr. Kissinger discussed his desire that the word of our encouragement to the Chilean military in recent weeks be kept as secret as possible. Mr. Karamessines stated emphatically that we had been doing everything possible in this connection, including the use of false flag officers, car meetings and every conceivable precaution. But we and others had done a great deal of talking recently with a number of persons. For example, Ambassador Korry's wideranging discussions with numerous people urging a coup "cannot be put back into the bottle".

[REDACTED]  
(Dr. Kissinger requested that copy of the message be sent to him on 16 October.)

1.3(a)(4)

8. The meeting concluded on Dr. Kissinger's note that the Agency should continue keeping the pressure on every Allende weak spot in sight - now, after the 24th of October, after 5 November, and into the future until such time as new marching orders are given. Mr. Karamessines stated that the Agency would comply.





DOCUMENT 12. CIA, SECRET Cable from Headquarters [Firm and Continuing Policy that Allende be Overthrown by a Coup], October 16, 1970.

PAGE 1 OF 4

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DATE: 16 October 1970

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(DATE AND TIME FILED)

TO

422  
IMMEDIATE SANTIAGO (EYES ONLY) [REDACTED]  
16 14 00z OCT 70

CITE HEADQUARTERS

802  
✓

1. [REDACTED] POLICY, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS WERE  
REVIEWED AT HIGH USG LEVEL AFTERNOON 15 OCTOBER. CON-  
CLUSIONS, WHICH ARE TO BE YOUR OPERATIONAL GUIDE, FOLLOW:

2. IT IS FIRM AND CONTINUING POLICY THAT ALLENDE  
BE OVERTHROWN BY A COUP. IT WOULD BE MUCH PREFERABLE  
TO HAVE THIS TRANSPIRE PRIOR TO 24 OCTOBER, BUT EFFORTS IN  
THIS REGARD WILL CONTINUE VIGOROUSLY BEYOND THIS DATE.  
WE ARE TO CONTINUE TO GENERATE MAXIMUM PRESSURE TOWARD  
THIS END UTILIZING EVERY APPROPRIATE RESOURCE. IT IS  
IMPERATIVE THAT THESE ACTIONS BE IMPLEMENTED CLANDESTINELY  
AND SECURELY SO THAT THE USG AND AMERICAN HAND BE WELL  
HIDDEN. WHILE THIS IMPOSES UPON US A HIGH DEGREE OF  
SELECTIVITY IN MAKING MILITARY CONTACTS AND DICTATES

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COORDINATING OFFICERS

....CONTINUED....

RELEASING OFFICER

SECRET

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER [REDACTED]

- 1: RESTRICTED HANDLING MESSAGES NOT BE DELIVERED DIRECTLY TO SPECIAL SIGNAL CENTER.  
 2: DO NOT EXCEED 69 TYPEWRITTEN CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.

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 UNIT: [REDACTED]  
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 DATE: [REDACTED]

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PAGE TWO

CITE HEADQUARTERS

TO

THAT THESE CONTACTS BE MADE IN THE MOST SECURE MANNER.  
 IT DEFINITELY DOES NOT PRECLUDE CONTACTS SUCH AS REPORTED  
 IN SANTIAGO 544 WHICH WAS A MASTERFUL PIECE OF WORK.

3. AFTER THE MOST CAREFUL CONSIDERATION IT WAS  
 DETERMINED THAT A VIAUX COUP ATTEMPT CARRIED OUT BY  
 HIM ALONE WITH THE FORCES NOW AT HIS DISPOSAL WOULD  
 FAIL. THUS, IT WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE TO OUR [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] OBJECTIVES. IT WAS DECIDED THAT [REDACTED]  
 GET A MESSAGE TO VIAUX WARNING HIM AGAINST PRECIPITATE  
 ACTION. IN ESSENCE OUR MESSAGE IS TO STATE, "WE HAVE  
 REVIEWED YOUR PLANS, AND BASED ON YOUR INFORMATION  
 AND OURS, WE COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT YOUR PLANS  
 FOR A COUP AT THIS TIME CANNOT SUCCEED. FAILING, THEY  
 MAY REDUCE YOUR CAPABILITIES FOR THE FUTURE. PRESERVE  
 YOUR ASSETS. WE WILL STAY IN TOUCH. THE TIME WILL COME

COORDINATING OFFICERS

....CONTINUED....

RELEASING OFFICER

S E C R E T

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER [REDACTED]

THIS FORM FOR USE BY AUTHORIZED RESTRICTED HANDLING MESSAGE USERS ONLY. [REDACTED]



1. RESTRICTED HANDLING MESSAGES MUST BE DELIVERED DIRECTLY TO SPECIAL SIGNAL CENTER.  
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 DATE: [REDACTED]

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S E C R E T

PAGE THREE

CITE HEADQUARTERS

TO

WHEN YOU TOGETHER WITH ALL YOUR OTHER FRIENDS CAN DO SOMETHING. YOU WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE OUR SUPPORT." YOU ARE REQUESTED TO DELIVER THE MESSAGE TO VIAUX ESSENTIALLY AS NOTED ABOVE. OUR OBJECTIVES ARE AS FOLLOWS: (A) TO ADVISE HIM OF OUR OPINION AND DISCOURAGE HIM FROM ACTING ALONE; (B) CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE HIM TO AMPLIFY HIS PLANNING; (C) ENCOURAGE HIM TO JOIN FORCES WITH OTHER COUP PLANNERS SO THAT THEY MAY ACT IN CONCERT EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER 24 OCTOBER. (N.B. SIX GAS MASKS AND SIX CS CANNISTERS ARE BEING CARRIED TO SANTIAGO BY SPECIAL [REDACTED] COURIER ETD WASHINGTON 1100 HOURS 16 OCTOBER.)

4. THERE IS GREAT AND CONTINUING INTEREST IN THE ACTIVITIES OF TIRADO, CANALES, VALENZUELA ET AL AND WE WISH THEM OPTIMUM GOOD FORTUNE.

5. THE ABOVE IS YOUR OPERATING GUIDANCE. NO OTHER

COORDINATING OFFICERS

....CONTINUED....

RELEASING OFFICER

S E C R E T

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER

THIS FORM FOR USE BY AUTHORIZED RESTRICTED HANDLING MESSAGE USERS ONLY [REDACTED]

1. RESTRICTED HANDLING MESSAGES MUST BE DELIVERED DIRECTLY TO SPECIAL SIGNAL CENTER.  
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ORIG: [REDACTED]  
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PAGE FOUR

CITE HEADQUARTERS

TO

POLICY GUIDANCE YOU MAY RECEIVE FROM [REDACTED] OR  
 ITS MAXIMUM EXPONENT IN SANTIAGO, ON HIS RETURN, ARE  
 TO SWAY YOU FROM YOUR COURSE.

6. PLEASE REVIEW ALL YOUR PRESENT AND POSSIBLY  
 NEW ACTIVITIES TO INCLUDE PROPAGANDA, BLACK OPERATIONS,  
 SURFACING OF INTELLIGENCE OR DISINFORMATION, PERSONAL  
 CONTACTS, OR ANYTHING ELSE YOUR IMAGINATION CAN CONJURE  
 WHICH WILL PERMIT YOU TO CONTINUE TO PRESS FORWARD TOWARD  
 OUR [REDACTED] OBJECTIVE IN A SECURE MANNER.

END OF MESSAGE

[REDACTED]  
 WILLIAM V. BROE  
 C/WHD

COORDINATING OFFICERS

RELEASING OFFICER

S E C R E T

[REDACTED]  
 DAVID A. PHILLIPS  
 C/WH/TFR

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER



347

4

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July 2000

SECRET 19 [REDACTED] OCT 70 CITE (SANTIAGO [REDACTED])

IMMEDIATE [REDACTED]

1. FOLL IS CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS ON 12 OCTOBER.

2. [REDACTED] PICKED UP [REDACTED] AT [REDACTED] HOURS

[REDACTED] WHERE [REDACTED] AND [REDACTED] WERE WAITING.

[REDACTED] TURNED OVER 2 PACKAGES (TEAR GAS AND GAS MASKS) TO

[REDACTED] JOINED OTHER TWO CHILEANS IN THEIR VEHICLE AND LEFT SITE. [REDACTED] RETURNED TO [REDACTED] WHERE GENERAL CAMILO VALENZUELA HAD IN MEANWHILE CALLED TO SAY THAT HE WOULD BE VISITING [REDACTED] AT 2230 HOURS.

3. VALENZUELA ARRIVED PUNCTUALLY. REMINDED [REDACTED] OF LAST TALK WHEN HE HAD PROMISED TO ALERT [REDACTED] WHEN ARMY READY TO ACT. THIS NOW THE CASE. FOLL WAS PLAN:

A. GENERAL SCHNEIDER INVITED TO STAG PARTY AT ARMY VIP HOUSE EVENING 19 OCTOBER AT 2130 HOURS.

B. WHEN ARRIVING AT VIP HOUSE, SCHNEIDER WILL BE ABDUCTED.

C. SCHNEIDER WILL BE TAKEN TO WAITING AIRPLANE AND FLOWN TO [REDACTED]

4

PAGE 2 SANTIAGO **SECRET**

D. VALENZUELA WILL ANNOUNCE TO ASSEMBLED GENERALS THAT SCHNEIDER HAD DISAPPEARED AND THAT GENERAL CARLOS PRATS TO SUCCEED SCHNEIDER AS CINC PROTEM.

E. [REDACTED] TO KEEP [REDACTED] CARABINEROS AWAY FROM VIP HOUSE AREA TO INSURE THAT ABDUCTION WILL NOT BE INTERFERED WITH.

F. ON 20 OCTOBER CABINET WILL RESIGN. ONLY ZALDIVAR (FINANCE) AND FIGUEROA (ECONOMY) WILL STAY.

G. ALL OTHER CABINET POSTERS WILL BE GIVEN TO MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES AND POLICE.

H. GENERAL SCHAFFHAUSER, CHIEF OF STAFF OF ARMY, WILL BE APPOINTED MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS. [REDACTED]

I. GENERAL URBINA [REDACTED] WILL BE RELIEVED OF COMMAND OF SECOND DIVISION IN SANTIAGO AND APPOINTED CHIEF OF STAFF VICE SCHAFFHAUSER.

J. ON 21 OCTOBER, FREI WILL RENOUNCE PRESIDENCY AND LEAVE CHILE [REDACTED]

K. ON 22 OCTOBER, MILITARY JUNTA HEADED BY [REDACTED]



4

PAGE 3 SANTIAGO ~~SECRET~~~~ILL BE INSTALLED~~

L. CAPTAIN RAUL LOPEZ WILL BE APPOINTED CINC NAVY WHICH AUTOMATICALLY RESULTS IN RETIREMENT OF ALL ADMIRALS.

M. GENERALS HUERTA AND VALENZUELA WILL STAY IN THEIR PRESENT POSITIONS.

N. GENERAL JOAQUIN GARCIA WILL BE APPOINTED CINC AIR FORCE.

M. JUNTA WILL DISSOLVE CONGRESS (VALENZUELA COMMENTED THAT THIS WOULD BE MILITARY'S ONLY UNCONSTITUTIONAL ACT).

4. GENERAL VIAUX KNOWLEDGEABLE OF ABOVE OPERATION BUT NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED. HE HAS BEEN SENT TO VINA TO STAY WITH PROMINENT PHYSICIAN. WILL BE SEEN IN PUBLIC PLACES DURING 19 AND 20 OCTOBER TO DEMONSTRATE FACT THAT ABOVE OPERATION NOT HIS DOING. WILL BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO SANTIAGO AT END OF WEEK.

5. MILITARY WILL NOT ADMIT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHNEIDER'S ABDUCTION WHICH IS TO BE BLAMED ON LEFTISTS. ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, CARABINEROS WILL INSTITUTE SEARCH FOR SCHNEIDER IN ALL OF

4

PAGE 4 SANTIAGO ~~SECRET~~

CHILE, USING THIS SEARCH AS PRETEXT TO RAID COMMUNIST-  
CONTROLLED POBLACIONES. EXTREME LEFTIST AND RIGHTIST  
LEADERSHIP WILL BE PICKED UP AND DISPATCHED ACROSS BORDER.

ACCORDING VALENZUELA, ONLY FOLLOWING HAVE BEEN BRIEFED ON

PLAN: [REDACTED], [REDACTED] AND VALENZUELA. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] SURMISES THAT [REDACTED] AND [REDACTED] ALSO CLUED IN AND THAT  
THEY IN TURN BRIEFED [REDACTED].

6. VALENZUELA DWELT AT LENGTH UPON JUNTA'S PROGRAM  
(WHICH FAIRLY COMMONPLACE AND THEREFORE NOT REPORTED IN THIS  
MESSAGE).

7. IF SCHNEIDER'S ABDUCTION SUCCESSFUL, VALENZUELA WILL  
GET IN TOUCH WITH [REDACTED] MORNING 20 OCTOBER [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] TO BE PAID \$50,000, PRICE AGREED UPON BETWEEN  
PLOTTERS AND UNIDENTIFIED TEAM OF ABDUCTORS [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

8. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

SECRET



**DOCUMENT 14.** CIA, **SECRET** Cable from Headquarters [Submachine Guns Being Sent to Station for Kidnapping Plot], October 18, 1970.

1. RESTRICTED HANDLING MESSAGE MUST BE DELIVERED DIRECTLY TO SPECIAL SIGNAL CENTER.

2. DO NOT EXCEED 69 TYPEWRITTEN CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.

ORIG: [REDACTED]

UNIT: WH/TFR

EXT: [REDACTED]

DATE: 18 October 1970

RESTRICTED HANDLING

CLASSIFIED MESSAGE

Copy \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

SECRET

MILITARY

(CLASSIFICATION)

(DATE AND TIME FILED)

[REDACTED]

18 23 11z OCT 70

CITE HEADQUARTERS - 856

TO IMMEDIATE SANTIAGO (EYES ONLY)

431

[REDACTED]

REF: SANTIAGO 562

SUB-MACHINE GUNS AND AMMO BEING SENT BY REGULAR [REDACTED]

COURIER LEAVING WASHINGTON 0700 HOURS 19 OCTOBER DUE ARRIVE

SANTIAGO LATE EVENING 20 OCTOBER OR EARLY MORNING 21 OCTOBER.

PREFERRED USE REGULAR [REDACTED] COURIER TO AVOID BRINGING UNDUE

ATTENTION TO OP.

END OF MESSAGE

Declassified and  
Approved for Release  
July 2000

257

[REDACTED]

WILLIAM V. BROE  
C/WHHD

COORDINATING OFFICERS

[REDACTED]

DAVID A. PHILLIPS  
C/WH/TFR

AUTHENTICATE [REDACTED]

1- [REDACTED]

2. DO NOT EXCEED 69 TYPEWRITTEN CHARACTERS PER LINE, INCLUDING SPACES.

386

ORIG: David A. Phillips

UNIT: WH/TFR

EXT: [REDACTED]

DATE: 23 October 1970

CLASSIFIED MESSAGE

Copy [REDACTED] of [REDACTED]

SECRET

(CLASSIFICATION)

(DATE AND TIME FILED)

TO [REDACTED]

IMMEDIATE SANTIAGO [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CITE [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED]

Approved for Release  
July 2000

1. DURING DAY OF 23 OCTOBER WE HAVE REVIEWED [REDACTED] PROGRAM, INCLUDING DISCUSSION WITH [REDACTED] WHO RETURNED TODAY AFTER ABSENCE FROM HEADQUARTERS. IT AGREED THAT GIVEN SHORT TIME SPAN OF [REDACTED] AND CIRCUMSTANCES PREVAILING IN CHILE A MAXIMUM EFFORT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. ONLY CHILEANS THEMSELVES CAN MANAGE A SUCCESSFUL [REDACTED] BUT THE STATION HAS DONE EXCELLENT JOB OF GUIDING CHILEANS TO POINT TODAY WHERE A MILITARY SOLUTION IS AT LEAST AN OPTION FOR THEM. COS, [REDACTED] AND STATION [REDACTED] ARE COMMENDED FOR ACCOMPLISHING THIS UNDER EXTREMELY DIFFICULT AND DELICATE CIRCUMSTANCES.

COORDINATING OFFICERS

RELEASING OFFICER

SECRET

....CONTINUED....

AUTHENTICATING OFFICER



18 February 1971

*Pro*  
MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Western Hemisphere Division  
FROM : Chief, WH/1  
SUBJECT : Conversation with Bruce MacMaster--  
Chile Operations

1. Because of the nature of the following information I feel that it is incumbent on me to inform you of a conversation which I had with Mr. MacMaster concerning his involvement in a sensitive Chilean operation. As part of a commentary by Mr. MacMaster on certain events which took place in Mexico City, all of which I have reported to you in previous memoranda, the following specific references to actions concerning events in Chile are hereby reported.

2. Mr. MacMaster said that in his travel to Santiago, Chile, in September of 1970 he had met Henry J. SLOMAN at the bar of a local hotel. According to MacMaster, the meeting was unavoidable since SLOMAN was arriving and he was departing the area and they were both involved as part of the same operation. Several items of interest including the grand bargains attainable in Santiago were discussed by SLOMAN and MacMaster. The main subject and the ramifications surrounding it I wish to call to your attention now is difficult to pinpoint in exact terms of time. However, it is clear that this subject was discussed by SLOMAN with MacMaster some time after the events I will relate to you took place. In one sequence, it is probable that MacMaster is reflecting on a conversation with an unnamed Chilean which presumably took place within the last fortnight.

**SECRET, EYES ONLY**

3. To begin at the beginning, MacMaster told me on 16 February 1971 that he was sent on a mission to Chile to recruit certain individuals for an action designed to cause difficulty for the Allende political forces in Chile. MacMaster said that he had met with three or four individuals whom I gather were Chilean military since he identified the key contact of this group as Brigadier General Roberto Viaux Marambio, former Commander of Army Regiment No. 1 in Antofagasta and former First Army Division Commander in the Chilean Armed Forces. Further, MacMaster stated that he ostensibly was representing American business interests such as the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and other unidentified business groups. MacMaster introduced himself as a Columbian businessman with ties to the aforementioned American business institutions. He did not go into any particular detail as to what his representations were designed to accomplish but said that the goal of his mission was to help create a situation which would encourage the Chilean military to activate a military take-over of the Chilean Government. He said that part of the theme he expressed to the group representatives he met with was that as a representative of American business interests he was most anxious to see the continuance of democratic institutions in Chile. In other words, should the Allende forces assume governmental control in Chile, the forces of democracy would suffer a severe if not permanent defeat.

4. Mr. MacMaster said that SLOMAN also met with members of the same Chilean military group mentioned above and represented himself as an Argentine with close ties to Latin American business interests. In referring to much later contact in the United States with a representative of the military group, Mr. MacMaster said that this individual referred to SLOMAN as either a representative of the CIA or of the Mafia or possibly both. Mr. MacMaster then said that the action against General Scheinder designed to create the climate to allow the military to effect a Golpe did not accomplish the desired objective. He mentioned the planned employment of a group of individuals of probable military make-up who were to kidnap General Scheinder using mace or chloroform which in turn was supposed to create a situation and thus set the stage for the military to act. MacMaster referred to a second group of right-wing students who also were under the control of Viaux who became involved in the action against Scheinder. According to Mr. MacMaster it appears that the student group was responsible for the machine-gun attack on General Scheinder.

- 2 -

SECRET, EYES ONLY



5. Mr. MacMaster said that at the moment three or four or possibly five members of the Viaux group are now in prison in Chile and that he believes there is serious concern that one of these people now jailed in Chile will possibly implicate CIA in the action taken against Schneider. MacMaster said that an individual from this group met him recently and is seeking a large amount of money--somewhere in the neighborhood of \$250,000 for the purpose of providing support for the families of the members of the group jailed by the Allende Government in Chile. Mr. MacMaster said that we could probably get away with paying around \$10,000 for the support of each family.

6. The foregoing account coupled with the statements, one by John Horton regarding the possible necessity of psychiatric treatment for MacMaster, the other by Paul Harwood which suggests that the role played by MacMaster in Chile may have an effect on how MacMaster views the Agency and events associated with the Agency, could conceivably have serious implications for the Agency.

7. Once again, it is most difficult for me to judge the validity of the information contained in this memorandum. One thing is clear from this and previous memoranda, that there exists an animosity between MacMaster and SLOMAN which needs careful watching to prevent a serious situation from developing.

- 3 -

SECRET EYES ONLY

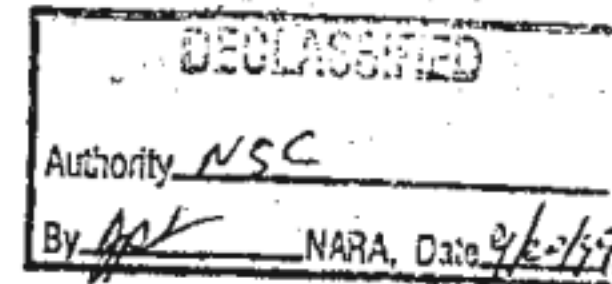


S/S 14291

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520



October 22, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENRY A. KISSINGER  
THE WHITE HOUSE

SUBJECT: Message to Chilean President Frei on  
Attempted Assassination of Army Commander

General Rene Schneider, Commander of the Chilean Army, is in serious condition as a result of bullet wounds inflicted by unknown assailants early October 22 in Santiago.

The Department recommends that the President send to President Frei of Chile a message along the lines of the enclosed suggested message.

If White House approves, we will have our Embassy in Santiago deliver the message. //

*Theodore L. Eliot Jr.*  
Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.  
Executive Secretary

Enclosure:

Suggested message

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Group 3

Downgraded at 12-year intervals;  
not automatically declassified.



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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Authority: <u>NSC</u>	
By: <u>[Signature]</u>	NARA, Date: <u>9/26/77</u>

Suggested Reply

Dear Mr. President:

The shocking attempt on the life of General Schneider is a stain on the pages of contemporary history. I would like you to know of my sorrow that this repugnant event has occurred in your country, and would ask you to extend to General Schneider and his family my sympathy and best wishes for speedy recovery.

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon



## Destabilizing Democracy: The United States and the Allende Government

*Our main concern in Chile is the prospect that he [Allende] can consolidate himself and the picture projected to the world will be his success.*

—Richard Nixon on why the U.S. had to “bring down” Allende,  
November 1970

Within two days of Salvador Allende’s inauguration, President Nixon convened his entire National Security Council to discuss ways to “bring about his downfall.” “We want to do it right and bring him down,” Secretary of State William Rogers declared at the November 6, 1970, NSC meeting on Chile. The Secretary of Defense, Melvin Laird, agreed: “We have to do everything we can to hurt [Allende] and bring him down.”

The SECRET/SENSITIVE memorandum of conversation of this cabinet meeting—a pivotal document withheld from the Church Committee on the grounds of “executive privilege” and kept secret for thirty years—records the unyielding White House commitment to undermine Chilean democracy, as well as the reason for it. “Our main concern in Chile is the prospect that he [Allende] can consolidate himself and the picture projected to the world will be his success,” stated Nixon, providing the only candid explanation of his policy to prevent the democratic election of a socialist from becoming a model for Latin America and elsewhere. “No impression should be permitted in Latin America that they can get away with this, that it’s safe to go this way. All over the world it’s too much the fashion to kick us around,” the president continued. “We cannot fail to show our displeasure.” (Doc 1)

After the failure of Project FUBELT, U.S. policy makers adjusted their strategy; but the goal of bringing Allende down remained. Rather than a small group of covert operatives trying to stimulate a military move in a short period of time, most of the U.S. government would now be involved in a long-term,



expanded effort to destabilize the Chilean government—economically, politically, and militarily. “The question,” as Kissinger’s talking points for the NSC meeting called for him to say, “is whether there are actions we can take ourselves to intensify Allende’s problems so that at a minimum he may fail or be forced to limit his aims, and at a maximum might create conditions in which a collapse or overthrow may be feasible.”<sup>1</sup> If forceful action was not taken, as Kissinger implied to Nixon’s scheduler when he requested an hour to brief the president before the National Security Council members met, Chile “could end up being the worst failure in our administration—‘our Cuba’ by 1972.”

Kissinger’s pressure on Nixon to take a hard-line policy posture on Allende is revealed in an eight-page White House briefing paper titled “NSC Meeting, November 6,” and classified SECRET/SENSITIVE. “The election of Allende as president of Chile poses for us one of the most serious challenges ever faced in this hemisphere,” Kissinger dramatically emphasized to Nixon. “Your decision as to what to do about it may be the most historic and difficult foreign affairs decision you will make this year.” Allende had been president of Chile for less than 48 hours, but a preemptive U.S. strike was necessary. Chile posed “some very serious threats” to U.S. interests, Kissinger informed Nixon—among them “U.S. investments (totaling some one billion dollars)” that could be lost. More important was what Kissinger called the “insidious” “model effect” of Allende’s democratic election:

The example of a successful elected Marxist government in Chile would surely have an impact on—and even precedent value for—other parts of the world, especially in Italy; the imitative spread of similar phenomena elsewhere would in turn significantly affect the world balance and our own position in it. (Doc 2)

Notwithstanding this danger, Kissinger warned, the State Department believed that Washington had no choice but to coexist with Allende because he was the legitimately elected leader of Chile and U.S. measures to oppose him would cause serious diplomatic damage to America’s image abroad. Nixon would have to overrule this position. “It is essential that you make it crystal clear where you stand on this issue” at the NSC meeting, Kissinger counseled: “If all concerned do not understand that you want Allende opposed as strongly as we can, the result will be a steady drift toward the *modus vivendi* approach.”

The clear position of Kissinger and Nixon, and indeed the very purpose of the November 6 NSC meeting, stands in sharp contrast with the many public representations that the president and his men would later make about the benign nature of the U.S. approach toward Chile during the Allende

years. Only a few months after ordering massive efforts to undermine Allende's administration, Nixon falsely asserted in his 1971 State of the Union address that "we are prepared to have the kind of relationship with the Chilean government that it is prepared to have with us." Four years after recommending a program of action against Allende that "might lead to . . . his collapse or overthrow," Kissinger testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in September 1974 that "the intent of the United States was not to destabilize or to subvert [Allende] but to keep in being [opposition] political parties. . . . Our concern was with the election of 1976 and not at all with a coup in 1973 about which we knew nothing and [with] which we had nothing to do. . . ." In an unprecedented presidential acknowledgement of a CIA covert operation, President Gerald Ford would argue that the United States had acted to preserve Chilean democracy. "The effort that was made in this case," he told the press, "was to help assist the preservation of opposition newspapers and electronic media and to preserve opposition political parties."

This was, submitted President Ford in one of the most famous statements made regarding U.S. intervention against Allende, "in the best interests of the people of Chile and certainly in our best interests."

### Cool But Correct: National Security Decision Memorandum 93

"We will be very cool and very correct, but doing those things which will be a real message to Allende and others," Nixon informed his aides on November 6. Presenting U.S. policy as detached diplomatic accommodation of the Popular Unity government while pursuing direct hostile actions designed to make it collapse, was a deliberate, conscious decision made at the highest levels of the White House. In the wake of the Schneider fiasco and Allende's inauguration, as Henry Kissinger explained to the National Security Council, a high-level policy review had produced several options for U.S. policy: (1) to seek a *modus vivendi* with the Allende government; (2) implement an overt, hostile policy; or (3) "adopt what is in fact a hostile posture but not from an overt stance, that is, to move in hostility from a low-key posture." A *modus vivendi* was out of the question; Kissinger had already secretly lobbied Nixon against that option prior to the meeting.<sup>2</sup> But a posture of overt hostility would be problematic. "Events in Chile," Kissinger told the NSC members, according to his talking points, were "taking a form which makes them extremely difficult to deal with or offset":

- a. Allende was elected legally and constitutionally. Therefore, he has legitimacy as far as Chileans and most of the world is concerned;



there is nothing we can do to deny him legitimacy or claim he does not have it as a tactic for weakening him.

- b. He is unlikely to move things along lines which would permit us easily to marshal international or hemisphere censure of him . . . he will project Chile as an 'independent' socialist country, not as a 'communist government' or a Soviet puppet.
- c. We ourselves have traditionally espoused the principles of self-determination; we have stressed our opposition to the concept of intervention in foreign affairs. It would therefore be costly for us to act in ways that appear to violate those principles.<sup>3</sup>

For that reason, Kissinger urged, and Nixon approved, Option 3, which in innocuous bureaucratic language stated: "Maintain an outwardly correct posture, but making clear our opposition to the emergence of a Communist government in South America; act positively to retain the initiative vis-à-vis the Allende government." A "cool but correct" posture masking continuing efforts to subvert the Chilean government, Nixon determined, would guide U.S. policy against Allende.

"The merit of the non-overt course," as Kissinger had told the president, "is that while it also utilizes the same kinds of pressure and hostility it promises to increase their effectiveness by avoiding the risks inherent in public hostility." Those risks, U.S. policy makers understood, included discrediting Washington among its principle allies in Europe and Latin America as well as serving "Allende's purpose of rallying the Chilean people around him in the face of the 'foreign devil,' " as one briefing paper prepared for Kissinger stated. In a special "briefing paper" for Secretary of State Rogers, the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs argued that were Washington to openly violate its announced policy of "respect for the outcome of democratic elections" it would

Reduce our credibility throughout the world . . . increase nationalism directed against us . . . be used by the Allende Government to consolidate its position with the Chilean people and to gain influence in the rest of the hemisphere . . . and move the Allende Government to seek even closer relations with the USSR than it might have initially contemplated.<sup>4</sup>

U.S. strategy for a broad range of low-profile pressures against Allende's government was laid out, at least partially, in National Security Decision Memorandum 93, "Policy toward Chile." In guarded bureaucratic language, the TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY directive—signed by Kissinger and distributed to CIA, State, Defense, the Joint Chiefs, and AID among other agencies—expressed the goal of U.S. policy: within "the context of a publicly

cool and correct posture,” the United States would “seek to maximize pressure on the Allende government to prevent its consolidation.” (Doc 3) The measures identified in NSDM 93 reflected Washington’s intent to isolate, weaken, and destabilize Chile until the country was ungovernable.

Among its other provisions, NSDM 93 called for “vigorous efforts” to rally other Latin American nations to join the United States in isolating and undermining Allende’s sociopolitical experiment, with particular focus on Brazil and Argentina. As enticement, Nixon authorized “close relations with friendly military leaders in the hemisphere” who were considered allies against the left in the region—including the Chilean military.

NSDM 93 also identified a range of economic measures designed to continue U.S. efforts to “make the economy scream,” as Nixon had previously ordered. The directive stated that “necessary action be taken” to: reduce and terminate current and future financing for U.S. exports and guarantees for corporate investment in Chile; lobby private investors to curtail economic activities; “bring maximum feasible influence” on the multilateral banks to cut their lending to Chile; and terminate bilateral economic aid programs. The NSDM also ordered a study from the Office of Emergency Preparedness on copper “stockpile disposal actions”—Nixon’s idea to dump part of the U.S. copper holdings on the international market to quickly undermine the world price of copper, Chile’s main natural resource. “I want something in a week on how we can sell from the stockpile,” the president ordered Kissinger and others at the NSC meeting of November 6. “Cutting the stockpile would hurt Chile. This is very important. I want State and Defense and everyone to study it. It could be the most important thing we can do.”<sup>5</sup>

### The Invisible Blockade

U.S. efforts to isolate Chile and quietly curtail bilateral and multilateral economic support constituted an “invisible blockade” against a country whose economy was deeply dependent on financial, industrial, and commercial relations with the United States. U.S. businesses generated two-thirds of the \$1.6 billion in foreign investment in Chile. Two major U.S. copper corporations, Anaconda and Kennecott, controlled 80 percent of the Chilean copper industry—an industry that accounted for some four-fifths of all export earnings. During the Frei years, Chile had run up almost \$1 billion in debt to U.S. banks. Economic operations relied heavily on U.S. commercial credits to finance machinery and parts for key industries as well as Chilean trucking, buses, taxis, and planes.

For years U.S. officials, and their supporters in academia, blamed Allende’s



socialist programs and nationalization of U.S. businesses for the severe drop-off in bilateral and international financial support for Chile; there was no “invisible blockade,” according to the disingenuous official histories, and Allende was responsible for his own demise. “It was the policies of the Allende government, its insistence on forcing the pace beyond what the traffic would bear much more than our policies,” Henry Kissinger testified on Capital Hill one day after the coup, “that contributed to the economic chaos.” But recently declassified NSC records on Chile show conclusively that the Nixon administration moved quickly, quietly and politically to shut down multilateral and bilateral aid to Chile—well before Allende had had any opportunity to implement his own economic policies or any question of Chile’s creditworthiness had arisen.

At the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the White House acted “to effect the early departure of the incumbent chairman,” who was deemed not sufficiently malleable, according to a secret memo written by Kissinger’s deputy, Alexander Haig.<sup>6</sup> The White House also passed the message to the U.S. representative that he did not have instructions to vote for loans to Chile. A SECRET/NODIS “Status Report on U.S. Stance on IDB Lending to Chile”—prepared for Dr. Kissinger several weeks after Allende’s inauguration—laid out the surreptitious credit cutoff:

The U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank understands that he will remain uninstructed until further notice on pending loans to Chile. As . . . an affirmative vote by the U.S. is required for loan approval, this will effectively bar approval of the loans.

“We have instructed our representative to delay action on Chilean loans pending before the Inter-American Development Bank,” Kissinger reported to Nixon in a mid-November, 1970, SECRET/SENSITIVE “Status Report on Chile.” “We are seeking the cooperation of the IBRD [World Bank] to similarly delay loans to Chile.”<sup>7</sup>

At the World Bank, U.S. officials worked behind the scenes to assure that Chile would be disqualified for a pending \$21 million livestock-improvement credit, and for future loans. Since the United States did not have veto power at the World Bank, the State Department’s Bureau of Inter-American Affairs prepared a series of questions for a Bank delegation to pose to authorities in Santiago—in an effort to show that Allende’s economic platform did not meet criteria for credits. “The [U.S.] Executive Director will routinely and discreetly convey these questions to Bank staff members,” another NSC “status report” for Kissinger noted, “as to insure adequate attention to them by the team visiting Chile and by other staff elements within the Bank, but without the hand of the U.S. Government showing in the process.”

And at the Export-Import Bank and the Agency for International Development (AID) the NSC issued “classified instructions” to withhold “any new commitments of U.S. bilateral assistance to Chile, including AID loans, AID Investment Guarantees, and Eximbank loans and export guarantees.” The Eximbank, which Chile relied on for credits to purchase major industrial equipment, spare parts, and other machinery critical for key industries, particularly copper mining, simply extended the reduction of credit status and loans it had implemented during Track II when Kissinger’s office ordered the bank director to drop Chile’s credit rating from a “B” to a “D” rating. A long-planned \$21 million loan toward the purchase of Boeing jets to upgrade the national airline, LAN-Chile, became the first casualty of the EX-IM Bank’s rating reduction. Since the “D” status influenced private U.S. banks, corporations, and private investors, as the Church Committee report pointed out, “it aggravated Chile’s problem of attracting and retaining needed capital inflow through private foreign investment.”<sup>8</sup>

By any evaluation, the cutoff of aid and credits to Chile was dramatic. In 1970, IDB loans approved before Allende’s election totaled \$46 million; following the election only two small loans for Chilean universities—totaling \$2 million—were approved until after the military coup. The World Bank, which had provided \$31 million in loans to the Frei government in 1969–1970, approved zero loans between 1971 and 1973. Bilateral U.S. assistance, administered through AID, reached \$110 million between 1968 and 1970; from 1971 to 1973 that figure dropped to approximately \$3 million. The U.S. Export-Import Bank, which provided some \$280 million in commercial loans and credits between 1967 and 1970 to Chile, granted not a penny of financing or lending in 1971.<sup>9</sup>

Predictably, one sector of U.S. assistance rose during the Allende years—U.S. military sales and assistance. Training and other military aid programs doubled between 1971 and 1972 from \$1 million to \$2.3 million. Between 1967 and 1970, sales of U.S. military equipment totaled \$6 million; between 1970 and 1973, that figure more than tripled to \$19 million. “With regard to the *Chilean military* we are maintaining our military mission on a ‘business as usual’ basis,” Kissinger wrote in a memorandum to Nixon, “in order to maintain maximum contacts with the Chilean military.”<sup>10</sup>

Kissinger also reported to the president that “on the economic side” U.S. officials had “informed U.S. business and labor leaders of our discouraging view of developments in Chile.” Since Chilean labor unions had a key role to play in agitating against Allende, on November 12, 1970, U.S. officials gave an “off-the-record briefing” to AFL-CIO president George Meany, presumably discussing whatever influence and support the powerful union organization could provide in Chile through its international affiliates and the



American Institute for Free Labor Development, which had collaborated closely with the CIA in anti-Allende operations during the 1960s. CIA officials continued to hold “luncheon meetings,” and other secret rendezvous with high-level ITT executives even after press revelations on their covert collaboration against Allende sparked the first major Chile scandal in March 1972. And the Nixon administration attempted to assist U.S. copper corporations in their effort to obtain major compensation for nationalized mining facilities in Chile by linking adequate indemnification with the rescheduling of Chile’s foreign debt payments.

At the personal direction of President Nixon, Washington sought to block Allende’s ability to renegotiate the massive national debt inherited from the Christian Democrats. In mid-January 1972, Nixon became infuriated by a secret memorandum from Treasury Secretary John Connally, complaining that the State Department bureaucracy was not sufficiently supportive of “keeping the pressure on Chile” and was planning to allow Chile to renegotiate its debt with European nations. Treasury should be named to lead the delegation to the upcoming Paris talks, Connally demanded, to advance “our principal purpose . . . to get broad creditor support to isolate Chile.” (Doc 4) In a margin notation, Nixon initialed his “RN” approval and scrawled “this is our policy.” He immediately sent a TOP SECRET directive to Connally giving him presidential authority to represent the United States at the Paris talks. On the Chilean loan matter, the president ordered:

Any suggestion, expressed or implied, that I favor U.S. support of an agreement to renegotiate the Chilean loan is in total contradiction to the views I have expressed on a number of occasions in various meetings on this matter. . . . I expect you to see that all agencies of the government strictly comply with my position.

With that presidential mandate, the U.S. took a hard-line position at the 1972 and 1973 Paris Club debt negotiations. Pressure was brought on major European creditor nations to join the U.S. in refusing to conclude a rescheduling of Chile’s foreign debt. When the other European nations moved to renegotiate Chile’s debt despite U.S. pressure, the Nixon administration broke ranks and refused to reschedule Chilean payments on more than \$1 billion owed to U.S. government and private sector creditors.

The Nixon administration also attempted to isolate Allende’s government diplomatically around the world. A SECRET/NODIS set of strategy papers, presented to Kissinger in early December 1970, reported on “USG consultation with selected Latin American governments . . . to promote their sharing

of our concern over Chile.” In his update to the president, Kissinger reported that “particular efforts are being made to consult with key countries such as Brazil and Argentina through both diplomatic and military channels.” The White House also considered trying to expel Chile—à la Cuba—from the OAS. A twenty-six-page “Study of Options for U.S. Strategy Concerning Chile’s Future Participation in the Organization of American States” seriously weighed the possibility of forcing the Chileans to withdraw or be ejected. But, the working group concluded, such tactics were “likely to boomerang,” be “highly devisive . . . alienate many of our Latin American supporters” and undercut the “cool but correct” facade of U.S. policy.

### Covert Destabilization

Economic strangulation and diplomatic isolation were two legs of a triad of destabilization measures under NSDM 93; the third—unidentified in the presidential directive because of its sensitivity—was CIA clandestine intervention. In a “covert annex” to a major NSC options paper on Chile developed as part of the NSDM process, the CIA submitted its initial blueprint to sabotage an Allende government in late October. At Kissinger’s explicit prodding to broaden “the scope for covert operations,” in mid-November the Agency drafted an eight-page “Covert Action Program for Chile”—along with a \$7 million operational budget—“keyed to NSDM 93.”<sup>11</sup>

For the CIA, a sitting Allende government provided a far broader target of opportunity than the brief transition period in the fall of 1970. A secret special report titled “Allende After the Inauguration” noted that “prospects for a military coup in the post-inaugural period” would significantly improve as Allende faced “tremendous administrative and governmental problems brought on by a continued economic decline and by an increase in political infighting within his coalition.” A coup climate “will begin to materialize and the military would have justification for intervening. Thus,” as the analysts predicted, “Allende’s administration may be short lived.”<sup>12</sup>

Toward that end, the CIA designed its covert operations to create and exacerbate economic, political, governmental, and military tensions “to divide and weaken Allende.” The “Covert Action Program for Chile,” submitted to Kissinger on November 17, was “directed at the Allende government, the Chilean Armed Forces, the non-Marxist opposition, the Chilean public, and other Latin American countries in an effort to maximize pressure on the Allende government.” In a SECRET/SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY summary for President Nixon, his national security adviser outlined the “five principal elements” of the CIA’s “Covert Action Program—Chile:”



1. Political action to divide and weaken the Allende coalition.
2. Maintaining and enlarging contacts in the Chilean military.
3. Providing support to non-Marxist opposition political groups and parties.
4. Assisting certain periodicals and using other media outlets in Chile which can speak out against the Allende government.
5. Using selected media outlets [in Latin America, Europe, and elsewhere] to play up Allende's subversion of the democratic process and involvement by Cuba and the Soviet Union in Chile. (Doc 5)

The CIA Western Hemisphere chief, William Broe, presented this covert program to the 40 Committee on November 19. Kissinger, sounding more like director of Central Intelligence than the National Security Adviser, attempted to micromanage the operation. Casting himself as a “devil’s advocate,” Kissinger pointed out that the CIA’s political operations against Allende’s coalition focused on supporting moderates. Since Allende was “holding himself out as a moderate,” Kissinger asked, “why not support extremists?” This would enhance the position of the most extreme groups—presumably the militant Movimiento Izquierdista Revolucionario (MIR)—and, according to the talking points Kissinger carried with him to the meeting “disrupt Allende’s game plan (i.e., maintain a moderate respectable image).” His talking points also called for Kissinger to emphasize that the goal of maintaining contacts and influence in the Chilean military was “not just for intelligence but for potential future action . . . obviously a very important element.” When Broe stated that the CIA had acted on a practical proposal Kissinger had raised at the last 40 Committee deliberations—“that prompt steps be taken to procure escudos [Chilean currency] for possible future expenditures in Chile”—Kissinger questioned the amount of the fund.<sup>13</sup> “Mr. Kissinger referred to the proposed stockpile of [deleted amount] in escudos and commented that this did not seem to be a very large fund to have on hand if stringent currency controls should be imposed,” states deleted section “d.” of the heavily censored minutes of the November 19 meeting.<sup>14</sup> (Doc 6) He “raised this question because he did not wish the problem of a lack of operational funds in Chile to be used later as a justification for [CIA] not to be able to follow through on desirable actions.”

Between 1970 and 1973 the CIA poured millions of dollars, and escudos, into extensive covert actions to undermine Allende. More than \$3.5 million was funneled into opposition political parties and allied organizations—not only to influence municipal and congressional elections and but to “bolster and encourage opposition” to the Popular Unity government, as one CIA talking paper noted, and to incite major ongoing anti-Allende campaigns.

Station operatives conducted a \$2 million propaganda program, concentrating on Chile's leading newspaper, *El Mercurio*. More than \$1.5 million was passed to business, labor, civic, and paramilitary organizations organizing protests, demonstrations, and violent actions against Allende's administration. A penetration and psychological operations program to rebuild access and influence within the Fuerzas Armadas de Chile provided the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and Washington with close contacts among military coup plotters. Those contacts became increasingly important as U.S.-supported economic and political upheaval inevitably created the long-sought "coup climate" necessary for overthrowing Chile's elected government.

### *Political Operations*

Since 1962, the Christian Democrat Party had been a leading recipient of CIA political operations in Chile as a beacon of democracy; after Allende's inauguration, the Agency poured covert funding into the party to transform it into a pro-coup force. On Ambassador Korry's recommendation, Kissinger summoned the 40 Committee to a special meeting on November 13 to approve funds—the amount remains classified—to be used to influence the party's political convention scheduled for early December. Washington's concern was not that Allende threatened the existence of the PDC; rather that the left-wing of the party, led by former foreign minister Gabriel Valdes, would win control away from the centrist faction and weaken what Kissinger's office believed was "the best potential source of organized opposition to the consolidation of the Allende Government." "As you know," Kissinger's aide Arnold Nachmanoff reported to him on November 12, Valdes "represents the group in the PDC that is prepared to accommodate to and cooperate with Allende." If it was "feasible to influence the PDC decision in favor of the Frei group," Nachmanoff wrote, "I would recommend approval of Korry's request."

Based on conversations with his sources within Frei's camp, Korry subsequently determined that "no funds and no actions are required" for the upcoming convention. But significant "foreign financing" would still be necessary. The party was twenty-five million escudos in debt from the 1970 campaign; it had "needs for 1971 operational expenses," Korry reported in a heavily redacted SECRET/EYES ONLY/SENSITIVE December 4 cable for the CIA's William Broe and Assistant Secretary Charles Meyer. Under still censored portions of the cable, the ambassador recommended that the CIA covertly help the PDC purchase a newspaper that would serve as a party oracle against Allende's government.<sup>15</sup>

In December 1970, the Santiago Station chief, Henry Hecksher, was recalled to Langley headquarters to develop plans for working with elements



of the PDC. The CIA also sent agents to meet with a PDC representative “to explore in depth certain proposals and requests for substantial support.” Similar meetings were held with representatives of Chile’s right-wing Partido Nacional (PN). In late January 1971, the Agency presented a comprehensive fourteen-page proposal on “Financial Support of Chilean Opposition Parties for the April 1971 Elections and [media purchases]” to the 40 Committee for approval. The Agency requested \$1,240,000 to covertly finance the campaigns of PDC and PN candidates, as well as those of the smaller Democratic Radical Party in the upcoming April 4 municipal elections. These elections “have a fundamental importance. . . . There is no doubt that a massive UP electoral victory will have significant repercussions not only in Chile but throughout Latin America,” the CIA argued:

When one considers Allende’s superb political performance during the first two months of his administration, and the speed and effectiveness with which the UP has moved to implement the most popular aspects of its program, it becomes obvious that the UP goal of a popular electoral majority may be achieved in the April elections. Such a victory could encourage nascent popular unity movements elsewhere in the hemisphere as well as disheartening opposition and institutional forces inside Chile.

On January 28, Kissinger’s 40 Committee authorized these operations. Shortly thereafter, the CIA funneled significant funds to all three parties, as well as sufficient monies for the PDC and PN to purchase their own newspaper and radio station to expand their anti-Allende campaigns. On March 22, May 20, May 26, July 6, and November 5, 1971, the 40 Committee authorized additional covert funds for the PDC and other opposition parties; on October 26, 1972, the CIA sought and received another \$1,427,666 to covertly finance opposition campaigns and yet another appropriation of \$175,000 was approved before the end of that year for a total of \$1,602,666 in anticipation of the March 1973 Congressional election. And on August 20, 1973, another \$1,000,000 was approved “to continue covert actions to strengthen opposition political parties and private sector organizations opposed to Allende’s UP government.”<sup>16</sup>

The Agency used hundreds of thousands of dollars of these appropriations to covertly fund the operations of private-sector organizations dedicated to undermining Allende’s ability to govern. CIA officials would later testify that “financial support to the private sector was confined to specific activities . . . such as voter registration drives and a get-out-the vote campaign.” In point of fact, as the CIA conceded to Congress in its September

2000 report, “CIA Activities in Chile,” the Agency “provided assistance to militant right-wing groups to undermine the president and create a tense environment.” A number of the organizations receiving CIA support—they included major associations of large and small businessmen and umbrella organizations of opposition groups—directly supported, and were closely allied with, key sectors fomenting economic and social upheaval, notably the truck owners and strikers that paralyzed Chile in 1973. The CIA has withheld documents on the truckers, including records from the Station that showed that one private-sector organization on the CIA payroll had passed \$2,800 directly to the strikers. But, according to Senate investigators who did review some of these records, “it is clear that antigovernment strikers were actively supported by several of the private sector groups which received CIA funds.”<sup>17</sup>

The CIA was well aware that “a substantial portion of the business community” was collaborating with groups dedicated to promoting violent disorder designed to “build a political atmosphere which would be propitious for a military coup.” In an August 29, 1972, cable the Station reported on “efforts by Patria y Libertad and Business Leaders to Provoke a Coup.” (During the Track II period, the CIA funneled \$38,500 to Patria y Libertad, a self-proclaimed neo-fascist paramilitary group responsible for numerous acts of terrorism between 1970 and 1973; low-level covert funding continued through 1971.) P&L and a “large segment” of the business community, the Station cabled, “are undertaking actions to increase discontent and incidents of violence, especially in the Santiago area, in order to create an atmosphere in Chile which would be propitious for a military coup. The business leaders involved are trying to foment strikes and labor conflicts, while P&L will attempt to provoke incidents of violence.” The collaboration of those organizations to foment disorder would continue until the coup finally took place.

### *The El Mercurio Project*

The covert operation that, according to the CIA’s own internal records, played “a significant role” in bringing about a coup was clandestine funding for the “*El Mercurio* project.” Throughout the 1960s, the CIA poured funds into Chile’s largest—and staunchly right-wing—newspaper, *El Mercurio*, putting reporters and editors on the payroll, writing articles and columns for placement and providing additional funds for operating expenses. After the paper’s owner, Agustín Edwards came to Washington in September 1970 to lobby Nixon for action against Allende, the CIA used *El Mercurio* as a key outlet for a massive propaganda campaign as part of Track I and Track II.



Throughout Allende's aborted tenure, the paper continued an unyielding campaign, running countless virulent, inflammatory articles and editorials exhorting opposition against—and at times even calling for the overthrow of—the Popular Unity government. “*El Mercurio* continues strong opposition to regime,” the CIA informed the White House in early 1971, “publishing attacks against Allende attempts to nationalize banks, violation of press freedom, and land seizures.” While CIA intelligence reports documented that the Edwards media empire retained its independence during the Allende years, *El Mercurio* did face growing financial problems from its own mismanagement, credit, and cash-flow problems, as well as advertising cutbacks, newsprint shortages, and labor unrest for which the Edwards and the CIA blamed the Popular Unity government.

In September 1971, a representative of the Edwards media group requested “covert support totaling \$1 million” from the CIA. The request prompted a significant internal debate among U.S. policy makers. In a SECRET options paper the CIA presented to Kissinger on September 8, the agency suggested that the newspaper faced an “economic squeeze” and passed on the position of *El Mercurio*'s proprietors that “the paper needs at least \$1 million to survive for the next year or two.” Washington had two “basic options:

- A. *To provide extensive financing for the newspaper* with the understanding that this may not be sufficient to stop the Allende newsprint, or labor stoppages. This would involve an initial commitment of at least \$700,000.
- B. *Allow El Mercurio to go out of business* and arrange a maximum propaganda effort on the issue of freedom of the press. (Doc 7)

Option B was risky, the CIA advised, because “Allende might be able to counter that by demonstrating that it was *El Mercurio*'s financial ineptitude which resulted in its closing.” The CIA Station chief and Ambassador Korry favored funding; others within the administration believed that \$1 million was “a very expensive price to pay for a little extra time” if the paper was going to close anyway.

Indeed, when the members of the 40 Committee were polled, each had a different position. Kissinger's aide, Arnold Nachmanoff, argued “we should probably take both options and link them.” The paper would receive \$700,000 but the U.S. would “condition our support on an understanding that *El Mercurio* will launch an intensive public attack on the Allende Government's efforts to force them out of business.” Attorney General John Mitchell, according to a summary of the discussion, felt “we should keep a strong voice alive but a weak one would not be worth it;” the Pentagon's

representative, Adm. Thomas Moorer, stated “we were gambling with a loser and [the] expenditure [was] extravagant;” CIA director Richard Helms opined that “the prospects were not good either for the short or long term.”<sup>18</sup>

Faced with a major disagreement regarding a specific anti-Allende operation, Kissinger simply decided to “take the matter to higher authority.” On September 14, in a rare example of presidential micromanagement of a covert operation, Nixon personally authorized the \$700,000—and more if necessary—in covert funds to *El Mercurio*. That evening, Kissinger called Helms to tell him that

(a) the President had just approved the proposal for supporting *El Mercurio* in the amount of \$700,000, and, (b) the President wished to see the paper kept going and the amount stipulated could be exceeded if it would usefully serve that purpose.

Per the president’s decision, Helms authorized his Western Hemisphere division to “exceed the authorized \$700,000 and go up to, and even over, \$1,000,000 provided it was warranted to keep the paper going.” (Doc 8) The initial \$700,000 was sent immediately; in October, Kissinger personally authorized the additional \$300,000.

Seven months later, the CIA requested that “an additional \$965,000 be made available to *El Mercurio*”—a covert “tranche” that would bring total expenditures on the paper to \$1.95 million in less than a year.<sup>19</sup> In a proposal prepared by the new head of the Western Hemisphere division, Theodore Shackley, the CIA argued that the decision to continue funding “must be based . . . on a value judgment of the importance of attempting to ensure the paper’s continued existence for political purposes.”<sup>20</sup> The paper was no longer on the verge of being shut down by the Allende government, but it was about to run out of credit. The new allotment, Kissinger was informed in a TOP SECRET memorandum, would be

used to repay a loan, to cover monthly operating deficits through March 1973, and to provide for a contingency fund of [deleted amount] to meet emergency needs such as credit requirements, new taxes, and other bank debts which could come up on short notice.<sup>21</sup>

*El Mercurio*, according to the CIA argument advanced for this money, was “deemed essential” to help CIA-backed opposition candidates win the March 1973 Congressional election—a major electoral test of Allende’s popularity. Now, as Kissinger aide William Jorden noted in a top secret White House “action” memorandum, the consensus was that “*El Mercurio* is important. It



is a thorn in Allende's side. It does help give heart to the opposition forces." And if, in the end, the newspaper did "go down the drain," Jorden reminded Kissinger, "we have an excellent 'freedom of the press' issue to use there and in the Hemisphere."<sup>22</sup> On April 11, Kissinger's office approved the funds.

Additional secret monies flowed to *El Mercurio* through the CIA's main corporate collaborator in Chile—the ITT Corporation. A declassified May 15, 1972 memorandum of a conversation between CIA officer Jonathan Hanke and ITT official Hal Hendrix recorded a discussion about \$100,000 bank deposits ITT was secretly making to Agustín Edwards. "He had told me money for the Edwards group went through a Swiss account," Hanke reported to his superiors.

Sustained by a massive influx of covert funding, the Edwards media empire became one of the most prominent actors in the downfall of Chilean democracy. Far from being a news outlet, *El Mercurio* positioned itself as a bullhorn of organized agitation against the government. In the summer of 1973, the CIA's Santiago Station identified *El Mercurio*, along with the paramilitary Patria y Libertad and militant elements of the Partido Nacional as the main private-sector organizations that "have set as their objective creation of conflict and confrontation which will lead to some sort of military intervention." The CIA's Western Hemisphere covert action division credited the paper with a singular contribution to creating a coup climate. In heavily redacted project renewal memoranda dated in January 1974, Agency officials stressed that continued funding was necessary to reward and sustain the propaganda outlets provided by *El Mercurio* because of its role in bringing down Allende:

Prior to the coup the project's media outlets maintained a steady barrage of anti-government criticism, exploiting every possible point of friction between the government and the democratic opposition, and emphasizing the problems and conflicts which were developing between the government and the armed forces.<sup>23</sup>

In an admission that U.S. covert operations had directly contributed to the overthrow of Allende, the CIA asserted that the propaganda effort, in which *El Mercurio* was the dominant actor, "played a significant role in setting the stage for the military coup of 11 September 1973."

### *The Military Project*

The Chilean military remained the "essential" player in Chile's future, according to assessments that CIA operatives in Chile repeatedly sent to Washington in one form or another. The Station placed tremendous emphasis on

covert operations targeting the armed forces. For the first year following Allende's election, the CIA invested considerable time and effort rebuilding its asset network—decimated by arrests and purges of those involved in the Schneider killing—within the Chilean armed forces. The Station recruited a number of new agents inside the military with the goal of penetrating leading officer groups so that they could be in communication with real and potential coup leaders, assuming that “the [deleted] program's end objective, a military solution to the Chilean problem, must be sought within very carefully drawn guidelines.” “We conceive our mission as one in which we work consciously and deliberately in the direction of a coup,” the Station cabled in November 1971, a position that headquarters cautioned was subject to conducive circumstances. Given the dramatic failure of Track II, both Langley and the Station agreed that “there must be predisposition on the part of military to take initiative themselves, that artificially stimulated or ill-planned precipitous action would be counterproductive.”<sup>24</sup>

By the fall of 1971, the CIA Station was conducting a “deception operation,” designed to convince the Chilean generals that Allende was secretly plotting with Castro to undermine the army high command, in order to “arouse the military” to “move against [Allende] if necessary.” By early 1972, the CIA was subsidizing an anti-Allende newsletter targeting the armed forces; and the Santiago Station began compiling arrest lists, installation targets, and other operational data necessary for coup contingency planning.

In August 1971, the Station began sending detailed lists of officers “strongly opposed to the present regime” back to Washington. The first concrete “Intelligence Information Special Report” on coup plotting, distributed to DCI Helms and to Kissinger, was dated on November 9 of that year. In “Preliminary Planning for an Eventual Military Move Against the Chilean Government,” the CIA reported, “senior Army, Navy, and Carabinero officers have decided on the overthrow of the Chilean Government some time in the spring of 1972.” By that time, the plotters expected, the Chilean economy would have deteriorated sufficiently to provoke a state of emergency during which the military could move. (Doc 9) In March 1972, the FBI sent Kissinger a “priority” intelligence report on various regiments, navy officers, majors and colonels who believed a coup “could become a reality in the near future.” The brothers-in-law of General Roberto Viaux, the FBI informed Kissinger, were “actively engaged” in coordinating the anti-Allende activities of right-wing exiles throughout the Southern Cone nations and “desired to convey the foregoing information to the United States Government.”<sup>25</sup>

Intelligence gathering on pro-coup Chilean military officers brought the CIA, inevitably, to General Augusto Pinochet. Although Pinochet signed onto the September 11, 1973, putsch only days before it took place, U.S.



intelligence had him on their radar screen of potential plotters as early as the summer of 1971. Drawing on an informant who attended a dinner party with Pinochet on August 5, the Station reported to headquarters that the general was a “mild, friendly, narrow-gauged military man who [is] totally immersed in new field of security, public order and political events and who clearly enjoyed feeling of being important.” His wife, according to this intelligence report, was turning against the Allende government, and his son was married to a member of the National Party who hoped to “push Pinochet to effect [a] coup.” But, the informant noted, other plotters assessed Pinochet as a person “who would not lead any coup.” (Doc 10)

At the time, Pinochet was the commandant of the army’s Santiago garrison; but he had also been given the position of Jefe de la Plaza in the capital city, making him responsible for emergency crowd control. “Seems he would have major functions in controlling any major military/civilian convulsion in Santiago,” stated one of many index cards the CIA kept on Chilean military officers in September 1971; by March of the following year, the index card had been updated to indicate that Pinochet was “involved with coup preparations” of army chief of staff General Alfredo Canales, with whom the CIA had collaborated during Project FUBELT.

In various intelligence reports, Chilean military officers cast Pinochet as uncommitted and therefore unreliable—“Pinochet would favor but would want to close eyes to events” one asset told the CIA in Santiago. On September 27, 1972, however, a CIA informant inside Pinochet’s camp reported that the general was “harboring second thoughts” about the necessity of overthrowing Allende. Pinochet now believed “that Allende must be forced to step down or be eliminated;” these were, in his words, the “only alternatives.” When Pinochet traveled to Panama that month to negotiate the transfer of U.S. tanks to the Chilean army, “he felt he was very well treated,” as a member of his entourage reported back to a CIA handler. And U.S. army officers at the Southern Command, according to this source, passed an important message along to Pinochet’s delegation: the “*U.S. will support coup against Allende ‘with whatever means necessary’ when the time comes.*” [emphasis added] (Doc 11)

As the CIA began issuing more strident reports on the likelihood of a military move, officials in Washington took up the issue of how and with what means to assist. In October 1972, a team of “appropriate CIA elements”—officials and analysts—gathered at Langley headquarters and “brainstormed the current Chilean situation from every conceivable angle,” weighing “various courses of action . . . to accelerate current Chilean events leading toward a coup,” as Shackley reported to the Senior Review Group (SRG) on October 17. The CIA group concluded, “no course of action which could be taken would help in a decisive manner to achieve the objective of removing Allende

from power.” At a State Department meeting “on Current Chilean Situation” later that day, CIA, NSC, and State Department officials evaluated what U.S. policy should be if coup plotters requested concrete assistance for overthrowing the Allende government, and/or assurances of post-coup U.S. support as a condition for undertaking the coup. As noted in a heavily censored memorandum for the record of this meeting, the SRG determined that because direct U.S. support for a military coup was not necessary for its success, the proffer of such assistance was not worth the inherent political risks. (Doc 12) According to the minutes of the meeting, “the group finally did agree on the following:

- a. If and when the Chilean military decided to undertake a coup, they would not need U.S. Government assistance or support to do so successfully nor are they likely to seek such support. Further, given the Chilean military capabilities for an unaided coup, any U.S. intervention or assistance in the coup per se should be avoided.
- b. [page and a half of text deleted that discussed whether the United States should provide assurances to Chilean coup plotters of assistance to a post-coup military government.]<sup>26</sup>

### The CIA-ITT Scandal

As Nixon administration officials weighed the degree to which Washington might directly aid and abet a coup, their caution was certainly influenced by the breaking of a major political scandal on U.S. intervention in Chile—the first of a series of covert operations scandals that would plague the CIA throughout the 1970s. On March 21, 1972, columnist Jack Anderson reported that “secret documents which escaped shredding by International Telephone and Telegraph show . . . that ITT dealt regularly with the Central Intelligence Agency and, at one point, considered triggering a military coup to head off Allende’s election.”<sup>27</sup> “These allegations are astonishing,” the *Washington Post* exclaimed in a lead editorial the next day. “How could it be—if it is so—that in 1970 an American President could consider the possibility of acting to prevent the democratically elected president of a supposedly friendly country from taking office?” Unprecedented in their detail, the ITT records—twenty-four secret documents totaling seventy-nine pages of strategy papers, memoranda of conversations, and meeting notes—candidly charted the intrigue of covert corporate collaboration between the CIA, White House, and embassy officials to provoke economic chaos and subvert Chilean democracy in 1970 and early 1971.



In Chile, the revelations set off an explosion of nationalist indignation. The leaked documents bolstered a long-standing belief among the Chilean left of U.S. economic imperialism, and confirmed widespread suspicions of Washington's covert efforts to thwart the Chilean socialist experiment. Moreover, with the publication of the secret papers, the facade of the Nixon's administration's "cool but correct" diplomatic posture toward Chile was destroyed. The Allende government, which had been in extensive yearlong talks with ITT officials over the value and acquisition of the company's majority interests in the Compania de Telefonos de Chile, cancelled negotiations and announced that ITT's holdings would be expropriated through a vote of the Chilean Congress.

In the United States, the Anderson article set off the first of many congressional investigations into covert action in Chile—and eventually the whole history of CIA operations abroad. Forty-eight hours after its publication, the powerful chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator William Fulbright, received a private memo from his top aide calling for a major inquiry. Anderson's articles, wrote Pat Holt

indicate scandalous behavior by representatives of ITT and of the U.S. government as well. I do not think it suffices to have a denial, which we got yesterday, by the Secretary of State of improper government conduct. If we leave it at that, the Committee would well be accused of being party to a cover-up. Some further action by the Committee is called for.<sup>28</sup>

The next day, Senator Fulbright authorized the establishment of a special Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations, and named a then little-known senator from Idaho, Frank Church, as chairman. The subcommittee had a broad mission to investigate the activities and influence of multinational corporations on U.S. foreign policy; but Church also oversaw a separate, discrete, inquiry into ITT and the anti-Allende operations, which produced the first hearings on covert action in Chile and the first in-depth official report on the issue: *The International Telephone and Telegraph Company and Chile, 1970, 1971*.<sup>29</sup>

With this major breach of secrecy in the midst of ongoing covert intervention in Chile, the Nixon administration went into crisis control mode. The exposure of Track I—in which ITT had played an active role—and Track II were at stake, as well as the continuing covert efforts to subvert the elected Chilean government. The unraveling of the truth, as White House counsel John Dean would tell the CIA director, could be "rather explosive."

*Nixon:* How the hell did that get out?

*Zeigler:* Well, Anderson got that from some source. Al Haig is sitting with me now.

*Nixon:* Well, he *was*—he [Korry] *was* instructed to. But he just failed, the son of a bitch. That was his main problem. He should have kept Allende from getting in.<sup>31</sup>

The initial Orwellian response to the CIA-ITT scandal set the stage for a protracted cover-up, made possible by a display of official mendacity virtually unparalleled in the annals of foreign policy. Outright deception—of the public, of Congress and even other sectors of the U.S. government—permeated the administration's effort to contain and conceal the facts of Track I and Track II. The CIA, State Department, and the NSC sought to obstruct the Senate Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations investigation. Cooperation was severely restricted; evidence was withheld; government and corporate witnesses committed perjury. In its commitment to hide the truth, and contain the inquiry, the administration even assisted ITT in defrauding the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC)—and by extension the U.S. taxpayer—in order to collect a \$94 million political risk insurance claim for its expropriated Chilean properties.

ITT's investments in Chile were insured by OPIC for close to \$100 million. But the OPIC insurance contract carried a clause excluding coverage "for expropriations resulting from 'provocation' by the Investor," except for "actions taken in compliance with a specific request' by the U.S.," as Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs Charles Meyer warned in a SECRET/SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY memo. For OPIC's management, the disclosure of the ITT papers strongly suggested that the corporation's own covert actions had provoked expropriation of its telephone company in Chile.

Full disclosure of the Track I documentation would show that ITT had indeed "provoked" its own expropriation by engaging in illicit and illegal intervention in internal Chilean politics. The corporation had approached the CIA in July 1970 and offered a secret "election fund" to support the conservative candidate Jorge Alessandri; it had conducted its own covert political operations inside Chile, among them passing funds to Alessandri through a secret channel provided by the CIA; ITT had urged the embassy to be more aggressive in blocking Allende, and conspired with CIA officials to destabilize the economy and "stop Allende." After the elections, ITT officials had secretly funneled tens of thousands of dollars into a secret Swiss bank account for *El Mercurio* as part of a covert CIA propaganda operation. But the Nixon administration's effort to cover up the scandal precluded sharing any information with OPIC; and officials feared that if denied its claim, ITT would



“turn on the USG” and argue that its covert involvement in Chile was undertaken at official request. “Our primary interests,” as Meyer wrote, “are to avoid or to minimize disclosures that could severely compromise opposition forces in Chile and embarrass the Administration.”

So, when OPIC requested that the State Department turn over “all reliable information available to the intelligence community on the activities of ITT which could constitute ‘provocation,’ ” the State Department denied it had any. “We have carefully reviewed our files,” stated the November 29, 1972, letter signed by Assistant Secretary Meyer, who had personally sent top secret cables to Ambassador Korry on meetings with ITT and other U.S. corporations during Track I. “We have no material that adds to the [routine] information we have already made available to you.”

The CIA also misled OPIC by baldly deceiving officials about the nature and knowledge of Agency-ITT collaboration in Chile and denying the existence of relevant records. A subsequent file review conducted for the Agency’s inspector general examined whether the agency had provided “adequate and correct information to the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for its use in considering the ITT claim.” The documents showed that “the Agency’s initial replies to OPIC queries about ITT activities were not correct, and those incorrect replies were allowed to stand for some time.”<sup>32</sup>

On March 16, 1973, in a SECRET/EXDIS memorandum, “The Church Committee Hearings on Multinational Corporations: Chile-ITT,” the State Department briefed Kissinger on the OPIC problem. “A central question is OPIC’s decision whether to pay ITT’s \$92.5 million claim,” the memo stated:

OPIC management proposes to deny the claim on the grounds that ITT activities disclosed by the so-called “Anderson papers” were in breach of its contract and prejudiced OPIC’s rights. The company presumably would resist such a finding in arbitration on the theory that it did nothing improper in Chile, that it rejected the suggestions allegedly made to it by USG officials or, alternatively, that anything it did was at the request of the USG. OPIC has scheduled a meeting of its Board of Directors for March 19 to take a final decision on the case.

After a series of corporate appeals—and perhaps subtle White House intervention—in January 1975 OPIC agreed to provide ITT \$94 million in insurance compensation for its expropriated properties in Chile.

Senator Church’s Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations suffered similar deceptions. “It is clear that the Agency did not provide the Church Subcom-

mittee all relevant information,” the CIA’s own internal file review would later conclude. “. . . the Agency was not totally forthcoming.” The State Department decided to withhold the file of cables between Korry and Washington—the same file it had told OPIC didn’t exist. “We do not plan to release the cable file to the Committee,” stated the secret March 16, 1973, memo to Kissinger from State Department Executive Secretary Theodore Eliot.

Both the CIA and the State Department did their utmost to limit the Senate subcommittee’s ability to investigate the CIA-ITT collaboration. The State Department maneuvered to prevent the committee from calling Viron Vaky—Kissinger’s NSC aide in the fall of 1970 who was privy to all the details of Track I and 40 Committee deliberations—to testify, threatening to invoke executive privilege. The CIA played hardball with the subcommittee’s request that former Western Hemisphere chief William Broe become the first covert operative to testify before a Congressional panel, attempting to limit his testimony to written answers to questions on “the narrow topic of CIA’s relations with ITT during the 1970 election period in Chile.”

Ultimately, on March 27, Broe did testify in executive session. His testimony, Senator Church announced the next day, “enables the subcommittee to have before it a full and complete record.” In fact, Broe, along with other key witnesses from CIA, State, and ITT deliberately misled the subcommittee—some to the point of bald mendacity. After a “careful review” in September 1974, chief of staff Jerome Levinson reported in a confidential memo to Senator Church that Broe’s testimony that there was “no” U.S. policy to intervene in the 1970 Chilean election was only “technically shy of perjury.” The CIA’s own internal file review concluded “there is reason to believe that perjury [by various witnesses] was committed and that the Agency was aware of that fact.”

Indeed, under the supervision of the Western Hemisphere chief, Theodore Shackley, the CIA conspired with ITT officers to deceive the Church Committee. In early May 1972, ITT senior vice president Raymond Brittenham traveled to Washington to discuss “with the Agency what ITT might say in the Senate hearings, what the Agency might say, etc.,” according to one memorandum of conversation. Shackley, according to David Corn’s biography, *Blond Ghost*, ordered his deputy Jonathan Hanke to meet with ITT operative Hal Hendrix for further discussions on withholding information. On May 11, 1972, Hanke picked Hendrix up on a street corner at 8:00 A.M. and “after driving around awhile we had breakfast at the Marriott Hotel in Rosalyn,” Virginia, Hanke reported back. According to Hanke’s summary of the meeting, Hendrix advised him on efforts by ITT executives to keep incriminating documents on the covert transfer of funds in Chile from falling into the hands of the Senate. “If they finally turn over the three sensitive



documents to the committee,” Hanke advised Shackley, “names of persons, banks, and funding mechanisms will be deleted.”<sup>33</sup>

ITT officials, among them CEO Harold Geneen, senior vice president Edward Gerrity, and Southern Cone manager Robert Berellez, all deceived the subcommittee. Geneen claimed that ITT “did not take any steps to block the election of Salvador Allende.” Gerrity claimed the \$1 million that ITT had offered to the CIA to help block Allende was for “low-cost housing . . . a farming program.” And Berellez repeatedly misled the Church subcommittee by denying any ITT contact with CIA officials in Chile.<sup>34</sup>

State Department lead witness Charles Meyer also lied to the subcommittee. Meyer, who was a key, if not particularly supportive, participant in 40 Committee deliberations during the Track I operations and who actively participated in decisions to clandestinely fund political parties and media groups in Chile to implement NSDM 93, told Senator Church under oath that

The policy of the Government, Mr. Chairman, was that there would be no intervention in the political affairs of Chile. We were consistent in that we financed no candidates, no political parties before or after September 8, or September 4, rather . . . the policy of the United States was that Chile’s problem was a Chilean problem to be settled by Chile.

Under questioning by Senator Charles Percy he continued

Let me simply say, Senator Percy, and with pride, and I don’t want to hammer on this, that the policy of the U.S. government, despite all of the electricity in the air at any given point, remained noninterventionist. We neither financed candidates nor financed parties nor financed Alessandri gambits. . . . Nor tried to precipitate economic chaos, and promoted neither civil nor military nor any other coup. The policy of Chile’s future was Chile’s.<sup>35</sup>

But the most egregious effort to deceive the Senate, and the American public, was undertaken by former CIA director Richard Helms—conceivably the most knowledgeable official on covert operations to destabilize Chile.<sup>36</sup> After a long career in the Agency, in November 1972 Nixon removed Helms as DCI.<sup>37</sup> The president then nominated him to be U.S. ambassador to Iran. On February 7, 1973, during desultory confirmation hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Missouri Senator Stuart Symington, who was sympathetic to the CIA, asked Helms two questions: “Did you try in the Central Intelligence Agency to overthrow the government of Chile?”

and “Did you have any money passed to the opponents of Allende?” Helms answered “No, sir” to both questions. As the CIA itself would later admit, “some of the statements in Mr. Helms’ testimony . . . seem not to be in full accord with the facts.” Helms, as Multinational Subcommittee senior staff member Jerome Levinson reported to Senator Fulbright in a memo, stamped SECRET, “had been less than candid and there were several important questions which had not been raised.” Levinson recommended recalling Helms because “the best way to get at the question of what really happened is through face-to-face questioning.”<sup>38</sup>

Helms was called again, in executive session, before the full Committee on Foreign Relations on March 6, and swore “to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.” Senator Fulbright turned over questioning him to Senator Church, whose staff had prepared dozens of extremely specific questions. As it became evident that Helms would not be able to get away with his usual method of evasive responses, Levinson recalls, Senator Symington managed to abort the hearing—but not before Helms had feigned forgetfulness and issued blanket denials. The following exchange took place:

*Senator Church:* Mr. Helms, did the CIA attempt at any time to prevent Salvador Allende Gossens from being elected President of Chile in 1970?

*Helms:* No, sir.

*Senator Church:* Now, following the election, and up to the time that the Congress of Chile cast its vote installing Allende as the new President, did the CIA attempt in any way to influence that vote?

*Helms:* Which vote?

*Senator Church:* The vote of the [Chilean] Congress.

*Helms:* No, sir.

“Mr. Helms did not have to deceive us,” Senator Church would later submit. “No one coerced him to commit perjury. He could have said ‘no comment.’ ”

When the Chile scandal over revelations of Project FUBELT exploded in the press again in the fall of 1974, the Justice Department under President Ford was forced to open a major investigation into “possible charges of perjury and obstruction of justice” by Helms. The Carter administration inherited the controversial case, and to avoid further embarrassing revelations at trial about CIA covert intervention in Chile, made a deal for the most minimal plea possible. On October 31, 1977, Helms made history. He became the first CIA director ever to be indicted for a crime. The Justice Department charged him with a two-count misdemeanor that he “did refuse and fail to



answer material questions” before the Senate subcommittee. He pleaded nolo contendere and was fined \$2,000.

Helms had been caught, but neither punished nor chastened. “I wear this conviction like a badge of honor,” he told the press as his CIA colleagues threw him a victory party and passed the hat to raise the amount of his fine. Lost amidst the Carter administration’s rush to let Helms and the CIA off the hook was the importance and impact of his crime: Helms and other members of the Nixon administration had sustained a cover-up of covert operations at a very sensitive time in U.S. efforts to undermine the Allende government, successfully evading public scrutiny until well after the coup took place.<sup>39</sup>

### Countdown Toward a Coup

A day after the Chilean military violently took power, State Department officials met to discuss press guidelines for Henry Kissinger on “how much advance notice we had on the coup.” Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs Jack Kubisch noted that one Chilean military official—General Pinochet himself, as it turns out—had told the embassy that the plotters had withheld from their U.S. supporters the exact date they would move against Allende. But Kubisch said he “doubted if Dr. Kissinger would use this information, for it would reveal our close contact with coup leaders.”<sup>40</sup>

In the months leading up to the coup, the CIA and the Pentagon had extensive contacts with Chilean plotters through various assets and agents and at least three days’ advance knowledge of a concrete date for a military takeover. Their communications derived from refocused covert operations targeting the military after the March 1973 Congressional elections in Chile. The dismal electoral outcome convinced many CIA officials that the political and propaganda operations had failed to achieve their goals, and that the Chilean military, as Agency documents suggested, was the final solution to the Popular Unity problem.

Until the spring of 1973, the political operations and propaganda generated by *El Mercurio*, and other CIA-funded media outlets, focused on a major political opposition campaign to decisively win the March 4 Congressional elections, when all of Chilean representatives and half of Chilean senators were up for reelection. The CIA’s maximum goal was to gain a two-thirds majority for the opposition in order to be able to impeach Allende; its minimum goal was to prevent the Popular Unity from obtaining a clear majority of the electorate. Of the 3.6 million votes cast, the opposition polled 54.7 percent; the Popular Unity candidates garnered 43.4 percent, picking up two

Senate seats and six seats in the Congress. "Actions undertaken by CIA in the 1973 elections have made a contribution to slowing down the Socialization of Chile," proclaimed a "Briefing on Chile Elections" written at Langley headquarters.

The reality was quite different, as both CIA headquarters and the Santiago Station understood. In the first national test of its popularity since Allende took office, his Popular Unity government had actually increased its electoral strength—despite concerted CIA political action, a massive covert anti-Allende propaganda campaign, and a U.S.-directed socioeconomic destabilization program. "The UP program still appeals to a sizeable portion of the Chilean electorate," the Station lamented in one cable. The CIA now had to reassess its entire clandestine strategy in Chile. "Future options," headquarters cabled on March 6, "now being reviewed in light of disappointing election results, which will enable Allende and UP to push their program with renewed vigor and enthusiasm."

The Station, now under the direction of a new COS, Ray Warren, took a forceful position on what "future options" would be necessary. In a pivotal March 14 postmortem on the congressional elections, the CIA Station articulated plans to reinforce its focus on the military program. "We feel that during foreseeable future, Station should give emphasis to [covert] activity, to widen our contacts, knowledge, and capability in order to bring about one of following situations:"

- A. Consensus by leaders of armed forces (whether they remain in govt or not) of need to move against the regime. Station believes we should attempt induce as much of the military as possible, if not all, to take over and displace the Allende govt. . . .
- B. Secure and meaningful Station relationship with a serious military planning group. Should our re-study of the armed forces groups indicate that would-be plotters are in fact serious about their intentions and that they have the necessary capabilities, Station would wish to establish a single, secure channel with such elements for purposes of dialoguing and, once basic data on their collective capabilities is obtained, to seek HQS authorization to enter into an expanded . . . role.<sup>41</sup>

At the same time, the Station also reaffirmed the need to refocus attention on creating a coup climate—the long-standing goal of U.S. policy. "While the Station anticipates giving additional impetus to our [military] program"



Other political power centers (political parties, business community, media) will play an essential support role in creating the political atmosphere which would allow us to accomplish objectives (A) or (B) above. Given the outcome of the election results, Station feels that creation of a renewed atmosphere of political unrest and controlled crisis must be achieved in order to stimulate serious consideration for intervention on part of the military.

The Station's gung-ho position, which clearly influenced its attitude and actions on the ground in Chile, was supported by a number of hard-liners within the Western Hemisphere directorate who pushed for a far more aggressive, violent approach—an approach that clearly did not count “saving democracy” in Chile as an objective. In a bald and blunt internal challenge to the strategy of pursuing political operations, on April 17 a group of CIA officers sent a memorandum to WH/C Shackley on “Policy objectives for Chile” calling for cutting covert support for the mainstream opposition parties. Such support “lulled” those parties into believing they could survive until the 1976 election. Moreover, if the CIA helped the opposition Christian Democrats win in 1976, the authors argued, it would be a “pyrrhic victory” because the PDC would pursue leftist “communitarian policies.”

Instead, the CIA should directly seek “to develop the conditions which would be conducive to military actions.” This involved “large-scale support” to the terrorist elements in Chile, among them Patria y Libertad and the “militant elements of the National Party” over a fixed time frame—six to nine months—“during which time every effort would be made to promote economic chaos, escalate political tensions and induce a climate of desperation in which the PDC and the people generally come to desire military intervention. Ideally, it would succeed in inducing the military to take over the government completely.”<sup>42</sup>

But the position of the Station and the hardliners at Langley was not shared by the State Department, nor by key senior CIA officials who feared the consequences of precipitous military action and believed in the prudence of caution given the ongoing congressional committee investigation into ITT and covert operations in Chile. There was disagreement on a number of fundamental and strategic questions:

- Could the Chilean military be counted on to act against Allende?
- Should the CIA be encouraging violent demonstrations through covert funding of militant groups before knowing for sure that the military would not move to put down the demonstrators?
- Given the current Congressional inquiry on the CIA in Chile, did

the risks of exposure outweigh potential gains of working directly with the militant private sector and the Chilean military to sponsor a coup?<sup>43</sup>

These questions were discussed repeatedly as the process of formulating the Agency's Fiscal Year 1974 proposals and budget for covert action became grounds for a significant internal debate—kept secret for twenty-seven years—over the strategic nuances of U.S. intervention in Chile.

The State Department, led by a new Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, Jack Kubisch, opposed the Station's desire to foment a coup, through direct support for the Chilean military or collaboration with extremist private-sector groups. Along with Ambassador Nathaniel Davis, who replaced Edward Korry in mid-1971, Kubisch preferred to concentrate covert action on an opposition victory in the 1976 elections. In addition, CIA officers at headquarters, such as former Chile Task Force director David Atlee Phillips—who would return to Chile operations as the new chief of the Western Hemisphere Division in June—well remembered the Schneider fiasco, and remained skeptical of the Chilean military's commitment to a coup. Cables from headquarters to Santiago reflected their uncertainty over whether the Chilean military would be more likely to move against the government than to move against street demonstrators and strikers that the Station wanted to support. Promoting "large-scale protests such as a strike," cautioned a March 6 cable from Langley, "should be avoided, as should any action which might provoke military reaction against the opposition." In a March 31, 1973 budget proposal, "Covert Action Options for Chile—FY 1974," headquarters argued that

Although we should keep all options open, including a possible future coup, we should recognize that the ingredients for a successful coup are unlikely to materialize regardless of the amount of money expended, and thus we should avoid encouraging the private sector to initiate action likely to produce either an abortive coup or a bloody civil war. We should make it clear that we will not support a coup attempt unless it becomes clear that such a coup would have the support of most of the Armed Forces as well as the CODE [Chilean opposition democratic] parties, including the PDC.

On May 1, Langley sent a cable to chief of Station Warren stating "we wish to defer any consideration of action program designed to stimulate military intervention until we have more definite evidence that military is prepared to move and that opposition, including PDC, would support a coup



attempt.” The Chief of Station responded with a request that headquarters postpone its request for FY 1974 funding until the proposal could be re-drafted to reflect current Chilean realities. “The most militant parts of the opposition,” including CIA-supported organizations such as *El Mercurio* and the National Party, the Station reported, were mobilizing to foment a coup:

The planning focus and action of all the opposition forces is on the period immediately ahead rather than on 1976. If we are to maximize our influence and help the opposition in the way it needs help, we should work within this trend rather than try to oppose and counter it by trying to get the opposition as a whole to focus on the distant and tenuous goal of 1976. In sum, we believe the orientation and focus of our operational effort should be on military intervention.

On April 10, the Western Hemisphere division did secure the approval from CIA director James Schlesinger for “accelerated efforts against the military target.” These covert actions, according to a May 7 memorandum to Schlesinger from WH division chief Theodore Shackley, were “designed to better monitor any coup plotting and to bring our influence to bear on key military commanders so that they might play a decisive role on the side of the coup forces when and if the Chilean military decides on its own to act against Allende.” (Doc 13) Headquarters authorized the Santiago Station “to move ahead against military target in terms of developing additional sources,” and promised to seek appropriations for an expanded military program when “we have much more solid evidence that military is prepared to act and has reasonable chance of succeeding.”<sup>44</sup>

The Chilean high command provided evidence that the military was not yet ready to act on June 29, when several rogue units of the Chilean armed forces deployed to take over the presidential palace known as La Moneda. In his secret “Sit Rep # 1” for President Nixon, Kissinger reported that Chilean army units had “launched an attempted coup against the government of Salvadore Allende.” (Doc 14) Later that day, Kissinger sent Nixon another memo, “Attempted Chilean Rebellion Ends,” noting that “the coup attempt was an isolated and poorly coordinated effort,” and that the leaders of all three branches of the military “remained loyal to the government.” (Doc 15) The failed coup attempt reinforced the hand of cautious U.S. policy makers who opposed a more activist CIA role to directly support the Chilean military.

This ongoing internal debate led to a delay in approval for the CIA’s FY 1974 covert action budget as the CIA and the State Department worked out compromises on how funding authorizations would be used in

In late July, the CIA reported that a coordinated coup plan was “near completion.” The plotters were still dealing with the Prats problem. “The only way to remove Prats,” the Station noted, “would appear to be by abduction or assassination. With the memory of the affair of the former Army Commander, René Schneider, ever present in their minds, it will be difficult for the plotters to bring themselves to carry out such an act.”

The CIA also reported that the military was attempting to coordinate its takeover with the Truck Owners Federation, which was about to initiate a massive truckers strike. The violent strike, which paralyzed the country throughout the month of August, became a key factor in creating the coup climate the CIA had long sought in Chile. Other factors included the decision by the leadership of the Christian Democrats to abandon negotiations with the Popular Unity government and to work, instead, toward a military coup. In a CIA “progress report” dated in early July, the Station noted “there has been increasing acceptance of the part of PDC leaders that a military coup of intervention is probably essential to prevent a complete Marxist takeover in Chile. While PDC leaders do not openly concede that their political decisions and tactics are intended to create the circumstances to provoke military intervention, Station [covert] assets report that privately this is generally accepted political fact.”<sup>45</sup> The Christian Democrat position, in turn, prompted the traditionally moderate Chilean Communist Party to conclude that political accommodation with the mainstream opposition was no longer feasible and to adopt a more militant position, creating deep divisions with Allende’s own coalition. The military’s hard-line refusal to accept Allende’s offer of certain cabinet posts also accelerated political tensions. “The feeling that something must be done seems to be spreading,” CIA headquarters observed in an analytical report on “Consequences of a Military Coup in Chile.”

The resignation of Commander in Chief Carlos Prats in late August, after an intense public smear campaign led by *El Mercurio* and the Chilean right wing, eliminated the final obstacle for a successful coup. Like his predecessor, General Schneider, Prats had upheld the constitutional role of the Chilean military, blocking younger officers who wanted to intervene in Chile’s political process. In an August 25 intelligence report stamped “TOP SECRET UMBRA,” the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) noted that the departure of Prats “has removed the main factor mitigating against a coup.” On August 31, U.S. military sources within the Chilean army were reporting that “the army is united behind a coup, and key Santiago regimental commanders have pledged their support. Efforts are said to be underway to complete coordination among the three services, but no date has been set for a coup attempt.”



By then, the Chilean military had established a “special coordination team” made up of three representatives of each of the services and carefully selected right-wing civilians. In a series of secret meetings on September 1 and 2, this team presented a completed plan for overthrowing the Allende government to heads of the Chilean army, air force, and navy. The incipient Junta approved the plan and set September 10 as the target date for the coup. According to a review of coup plotting obtained by the CIA, the general who replaced Carlos Prats as commander in chief, General Augusto Pinochet, was “chosen to be head of the group” and would determine the hour for the coup to begin.<sup>46</sup>

On September 8, both the CIA and the DIA alerted Washington that a coup was imminent, and confirmed the date of September 10. A DIA intelligence summary stamped TOP SECRET UMBRA reported that “the three services have reportedly agreed to move against the government on 10 September, and civilian terrorist and right-wing groups will allegedly support the effort.” (Doc 17) The CIA reported that the Chilean navy would “initiate a move to overthrow the government” at 8:30 A.M. on September 10th and that Pinochet “has said that the army will not oppose the navy’s action.”

On September 9, the Station updated its coup countdown. A member of the CIA’s covert agent team in Santiago, Jack Devine, received a call from an asset who was fleeing the country. “It is going to happen on the eleventh,” as Devine recalled the conversation. His report, distributed to Langley headquarters on September 10, stated:

A coup attempt will be initiated on 11 September. All three branches of the Armed Forces and the Carabineros are involved in this action. A declaration will be read on Radio Agricultura at 7 A.M. on 11 September. The Carabineros have the responsibility of seizing President Salvador Allende.

According to Donald Winters, a CIA high-ranking agent in Chile at the time of the coup, “the understanding was they [the Chilean military] would do it when they were ready and at the final moment tell us it was going to happen.”<sup>47</sup> On the eve of the putsch, however, at least one sector of the coup plotters became nervous about what would happen if fighting became protracted and the takeover did not go as planned. On the night of September 10, as the military quietly assumed positions to violently take power the next day, a “key officer of [the] Chilean military group planning to overthrow President Allende,” as CIA headquarters described him, contacted a U.S. official—it remains unclear whether it was a CIA, defense or embassy officer—and “asked if

Chile. Finally, on August 20, the 40 Committee authorized, via telephone, \$1 million for clandestine funding to opposition political parties and private-sector organizations—but designated a “contingency fund” for the private-sector operations that could only be spent with approval from Ambassador Davis. Within three days, the Station was pressing for approval to use the money to sustain strikes and street demonstrations as well as to orchestrate a takeover from within—pushing the military to take key positions in Allende’s cabinet where they could wield the power of state and reduce him to a “figurehead” president. “Events are moving very fast and military attitudes are likely to be decisive at this moment,” the Station cabled on August 24. “It is a time when significant events or pressures could effect [Allende’s] future.”

In Washington the next day, CIA director William Colby sent a memo to Kissinger, submitting the Station’s arguments—word-for-word—and requesting authorization to move forward with the funds. The memo, “Proposed Covert Financial Support of Chilean Private Sector,” used language designed to assuage State Department sensitivities. “The Santiago Station would not be working directly with the armed forces in an attempt to bring about a coup nor would its support to the overall opposition forces have this as its result,” Colby submitted. But he added this caveat: “Realistically, of course, a coup could result from increased opposition pressure on the Allende government.” (Doc 16)

By then, the CIA had multiple, and promising, reports of coup plotting. In mid-August, C/WHD Phillips had dispatched a veteran agent to Santiago to assess the situation. He cabled back that “in the past several weeks we have again received increased reporting of plotting and have seen a variety of dates listed for possible coup attempt.” One report noted that military plotters had chosen July 7 as the “target date” for another coup attempt, but the date was now being postponed because of the opposition of Commander in Chief Carlos Prats, as well as the difficulty in lining up “the key Army regiments in the Santiago area.” According to the CIA source:

Key problem for the military plotters is now how to overcome this vertical command impediment. One way would be for the plotting Army generals to meet with General Prats, advise him he no longer enjoyed the confidence of the Army high command, and thus remove him. The plotters’ choice to replace Prats, at the time of the coup d’état is to be attempted, is General Manuel Torres, commander of the fifth army division and the third ranking Army general. The plotters do not regard General Augusto Pinochet, who is the second most senior officer in the army, as a suitable replacement for Prats under such conditions.



the U.S. government would come to the aid of the Chilean military if the situation became difficult.” The officer was assured that his question “would promptly be made known to Washington,” according to a highly classified memo sent by David Atlee Phillips to Henry Kissinger on September 11, as the coup was in progress. (Doc 18)

At the time of the coup, both the State Department and the CIA were making contingency plans for U.S. assistance if the military move appeared to be failing. On September 7, Assistant Secretary Kubisch reported to State and CIA officers that high-level department officials had discussed Chile and determined the following: “If there should be a coup attempt, which appears likely to be successful and satisfactory from our standpoint, we will stand off;” but “if there should be a coup, which might be viewed as favorable but which appears in danger of failure we may want a capability for influencing the situation.” Kubisch tasked the CIA to “give this problem attention.”<sup>48</sup>

That issue proved to be irrelevant. “Chile’s coup d’état was close to perfect,” Lt. Col. Patrick Ryan, head of the U.S. military group in Valparaíso, reported in a “Sitrep” to Washington. By 8:00 A.M. on September 11, the Chilean navy had secured the port town of Valparaíso, and announced that the Popular Unity government was being overthrown. In Santiago, Carabinero forces were supposed to detain President Allende at his residence, but he managed to make his way to La Moneda, Chile’s White House, and began broadcasting radio messages for “workers and students” to come “and defend your government against the armed forces.” As army tanks surrounded La Moneda firing on its walls, Hunter jets launched a pinpoint rocket attack on Allende’s offices at around noon, killing many of his guards. Another aerial strafing attack accompanied the military’s ground effort to take the inner courtyard of the Moneda at 1:30 P.M.

During the fighting, the military repeatedly demanded that President Allende surrender, and made a perfunctory offer to fly him and his family out of the country. In a now famous audiotape of General Pinochet issuing instructions to his troops via radio communications on September 11, he is heard to laugh and swear “that plane will never land.” Forecasting the savagery of his regime, Pinochet added: “Kill the bitch and you eliminate the litter.” Salvador Allende was found dead from gunshot wounds in his inner office around 2:00 P.M.<sup>49</sup> At 2:30 P.M., the armed forces radio network broadcast an announcement that La Moneda had “surrendered” and that the entire country was under military control.

International reaction to the coup was immediate, widespread, and overwhelmingly condemnatory. Numerous governments denounced the military takeover; massive protests were held throughout Latin America. Inevitably, finger-pointing was directed at the U.S. government. In his confirmation hear-